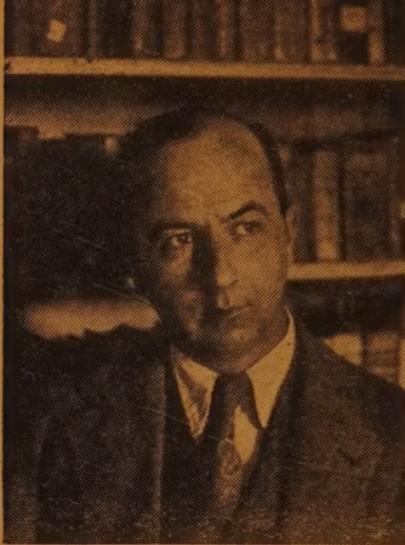




Provincetown
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Books by

Stark Young



THE SAINT

Provincetown-Greenwich Plays



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THE SAINT

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THE SAINT

A Play in Four Acts

STARK YOUNG



NEW YORK
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1925

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To
ROBERT EDMOND JONES

Provincetown-Greenwich Plays

THE SAINT

Vol. 1
Radio 1920
3 students
New Haven
Dr. Sigmund
Freud
Hannibal
3 acts
3 scenes
3 characters

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

The theme of *The Saint* is continuity, going on, the long line of the soul's days that makes life possible to bear.

I have tried always to create into every part and element making up the play a statement of the essential idea in terms of that part. For the first thing, the theme is stated in the quality of the story, which carries one man's life from one spot in its course to another, passionately and grotesquely filled with struggle, with the wings of his soul and the flight of his blood, the clutter and fire of the world about him, the old forces of life within him, from one spot in his course to another, never to an end but always going on. The quality of the theme extends into the motifs and appearances of the play. It is stated in the procession going past, with that figure of the eternal mother and the pale body of that dead young man, divine dreamer, images going on forever through time and the world. And it is stated in that stream of music through the streets; I want the whole play to move in music and in the rumor and memory of the natural earth. The theme is stated in Valdez's history—the silence and inexpressibility and vividness that Pacho and Tip and

Pigeons and the players and students feel in Valdez, and the vexation and mystery of him that disturbs Marietta; his nights in the open, the light, the canyons, deserts and wild creatures; his promise of eminence; all serve to express the continuity and quality of life as implied in him.

It is in regard to this theme of *The Saint* that the characters in it are measured. By their response to Valdez we in a manner know them. Pacho, Tip, Pigeons, Dedaux, Marietta, by the extent to which they are drawn to Valdez to live and suffer with him, we can know how much they respond to life at its center.

And in the same way is indicated the nature of their own continuity. Pigeons is a tragic grotesque, she is one of those mockeries in whom life is consumed by that which it is nourished by. She has the supreme misfortune to be least attractive when she loves. She defeats her own desires, she destroys herself to express herself. She appears as a distorted mask of her own intensity and rightness. Her methods ironically thwart her ends. Pacho, too, is a failure. He has a mind that is clear and ironical and philosophic but gravely garrulous; and drink has ruined his chance. But he has in him yet the recognition of essentials, he has tenderness, goodness, and an indestructible peace somewhere of his own. Dedaux is soulless but with something contained in him as in nature; he has a kind of animal

continuity with its conclusion in mere decay and rot. Marietta's life wanders and is lost between the two sides of itself. She is drawn toward the living mystery of Valdez on one hand and on the other toward the impassive and fatal vitality and beauty of Dedaux. She cannot give herself to Valdez, and in time she will be scattered and thrown off by Dedaux. Valdez alone of them all has his line unbroken. He suffers most because there is most of life in him; and in the measure that he receives life he is taken up and included within it and made a part of its passionate, defeated, indestructible permanence and divinity.

TECHNICALLY

Technically the intention in *The Saint* is never realistic. It never intends to reproduce the sheer surface of life but intends to find, in the region of the real, such words and acts as will express and embody in some concentrated and receivable form the life behind them. As for the lines, what is not said in *The Saint* is more than half the truth of it. The actions seen on the stage are intended to arise from abundant experience within, but to be in themselves patterns that state to the eye the content behind them. To discover these was my deepest necessity. As examples of these, often quite obvious, I hope, I may mention the throwing of Dedaux's knives before he talks with Pigeons, who loves him and is despised and cast off by him, and the knife

left quivering in the wood when he turns and begins to answer her. Indeed the very fact of Dedaux's being a knife thrower carries in it something of his meaning, the easy assurance and the unerring aim that belong in his art, his cold, passionate animal perfection and his thrust into life. There are other examples; in the second act the darkness at the front of the stage and the glare at the back beyond the mass of shadows of the show people when Valdez goes out to join them; Dedaux's cloak left there near Pigeons when he has gone off with Marietta, and her inability all through the scene to leave it alone; the mask of Charlie Chaplin—himself a mask—on Valdez's tragic life, a mask on a mask; the instances of kneeling that we see in the final act, the two men on their knees to one another's souls, Marietta's animal terror before Valdez's pistol and her offering him the money, Valdez prostrate before this dreamer and tragic god as he is borne past. These are examples of such an intention in the writing of *The Saint* to create actions that are the ideas, to create things seen that embody a visual statement of the idea behind them.

THE ACTING

The Saint is, in intention at least, first and last theater. In the acting of it, if anything is to be sacrificed, the actors may let the more subtle significances and meanings go and play for the melo-

drama. They must see to it that the play carries as a story, a story that bears, as an event in life does, implications varying in range and beauty with the range of the observer. *The Saint* needs first of all to go as theater. I should like to think that, whatever else might be achieved with this play, any lively stock company could make a go of it.

To speak more accurately, however, and from a more profound standpoint of technique, the kind of acting demanded in any important interpretation of the scenes rests on concentration. It is not realistic and imitative and restless detail that is to be applied to the playing of *The Saint* but a method of study that will secure a realization of the life of each character and of all the characters, and the quality of their contact in the scenes. The actor must have this and also a constant remembrance that the speeches and acts are culminations and finalities of what is lived within, of the character's past living and present emotion.

In playing *The Saint* actors should bear always in mind that on the stage merely feeling the moment has little to do with expressing it; that it is necessary absolutely to discover in every case the projection to the audience of what is felt inside the actor, or there is no use trying to act at all. The external manner of the acting in *The Saint* should be simple and concentrated in stage business and movement and consummate and final in conception, and in that

way will it become expressive in the same quality as the play itself is expressive. Terrible realization, then, feeling, concentration! But the acting should never be merely felt and still. The actor, while he is on the stage, belongs to the audience not to himself. Acting may have repose, but it never loses its continuous line and rhythm from the actor's entrance to his exit in a scene. Acting may have quietness but never negative stillness, any more than there is stillness in the blood through our bodies.

The rhythm in the scenes of *The Saint* is not without significance. Valdez's stillness before the statue of the Virgin, the bustle of the seminarians, the philosophy of Pacho, the meeting with Marietta, the procession, the struggle, the departure and silence, the commedia, the impacts of Valdez, Tip Thompson, Pigeons, Marietta, Dedaux on one another, the pauses at the dressing-table, the mad tricks on the cart, the aloneness, the return to the portico, meditation, talk with Pacho, Marietta and Dedaux, and at the last the storm of rage and pain in Valdez, the procession again, the seminarians, the departure alone, the stillness; in all these scenes and the parts of them there is embodied in some manner the rhythm of a single soul's history, its solitude with itself, its rush toward other people and toward life, its return into itself.

THE SAINT

ACT I

The Play opens in the portico of a seminary in Las Flores, a town on the border between the Southwest and Mexico. On either side of the stage are walls of the building running almost at right angles to the footlights but slanting a little in toward the middle of the back space. Between these two walls there is an opening looking to the south that shows, beyond two small columns that support the portico roof, a stone street, and rising from the far side of it the stone and adobe walls of the houses opposite. The houses opposite run along in a varied mass almost obscured in the deep blue night. In the sky above the long varied lines of the flat housetops three great stars are shining.

Slightly to the stage left of the center of this line of walls there is a stair running upward a story; the light from an unseen street lamp falls on the stair landing and on the wall beyond; a patch of shadow lies across the stair as it

descends to the street. It is going on toward two o'clock, and, seen almost rather than heard, the sounds of the town life appear, a faint sound for an interval or so like singing, a low rumble, a far-off music of guitars heard only for a vanishing second. It seems all to be a form of stillness or of light, as the place is and the blue night outside.

Toward the back of the portico and in the middle stands a statue, life size, of the Virgin Mother. Her eyes are wide, her lips slightly parted, her face set and primitive; it is the work of some artist of the people; its look is barbaric, fascinating, fixed, cruel, mysterious and gentle. Around her head is a great halo of points like a star and over these a veil hanging down at either side of the head. Her hands are stiffly down at her sides. She is covered with glittering chains and rings and gifts. And standing out like rays from her breast are seven swords; they are barbarous, shining, hypnotic. She is Mary of the Seven Times Wounded Heart. Mary the Mother of God.

Before her a young man stands on his knees. He does not move. He keeps his eyes fixed on this image. His feeling for her is mystical, rapt, sensuous; there is brutality in it, cruelty, ecstasy. At the foot of the Virgin are holders in which the candles are lighted as she sits

on the floor. The heart-shaped flames burn, the light shines on the motionless gaze of the statue, and makes a dark silhouette out of the head of the worshiper kneeling rapt before her.

Here, as all throughout the play, there is no specially or self-consciously poetic or elaborate acting required, no special point or effect to be laid on. The pressure of the night's beauty, the outline of the kneeling motionless figure, the music rising far off from time to time, and the power of the life in us all, in the actor there and the audience—these things, if felt and allowed to take their way in an intensified projection on the actor's part, will express the whole idea that underlies the moment.

No one passes in the street outside; the blue night is there, the light is faint and steady on the stair going up through the walls of the houses opposite. Far, far away in the streets of the Mexican quarter somewhere again there is the faint breath of singing for a moment, *La Golandrina*, which will be heard later, and is a part of the soul of the spring night everywhere. Meanwhile, to the stage right, soon after the song arose, a small bell has rung in the seminary. And presently can be heard the sound of feet shuffling; and the group of seminarians, boys from fifteen to twenty years in age, more or less rough and tumble, pours on

to the stage with old PACHO, a Mexican, the gardener and sexton, pushing his way through them. He is an old man, with a dark skin and a nose too red from drink. A Mexican, not very tall. He looks intelligent and good and droll and direct. He has failed in life, but he knows many things and he likes to catalogue them. He speaks rather formally, and with a little continuous rhythm of his own, with Latin gravity and a homely bluntness. PACHO goes up to VALDEZ, and touches his shoulder gently.

PACHO

Señorito, Our Lady is going now, Sir. It's time we were off, you know, Señor. The others went long ago; we must take Our Lady now. [He begins to busy himself with the statue. He sets about this piece of work in the most practical manner, folding the Madonna's coverings as if it were a saddle blanket. He leans over finally to blow out the candles.] You'll pardon me, Señorito?

[As PACHO begins to blow out the candles, VALDEZ rises and wanders absently toward the left of the stage, with his back to the audience and looking out into the night, nearer the boys. A tremendous struggle is going on in him. PACHO busies himself tucking in the Virgin's veil and pinning her together, getting her ready for her journey to the church.]

ONE OF THE STUDENTS

[*Not loud, but almost yodling.*]

Valdez—!

SECOND STUDENT

[*Half under his breath.*]

Hi, there, Saint! Hi there! what you thinking about? Hombre! Andale!

THIRD STUDENT

He's got his haircloth on, haven't you, Valdez?

SECOND STUDENT

[*Grinning as he goes on with his teasing.*]

The Saint was talking in his sleep last night. Ah, I heard you, Saint! Talking 'bout somebody. [VALDEZ looks quickly at him for a moment.] Somebody! You called somebody.

PACHO

They're always joking, Señorito. Got to, some folks have.

SECOND STUDENT

Don't cry, Pacho'll save you, Saint.

PACHO

Shh! young gentlemen, remember what day it is. Good Friday is not April Fool's. Remember who you are, young gentlemen! They went long ago. And you are here to take Our Lady. She's leaving

for a week, but she will come back to us. Moreover, you're going to be priests of the Church such of you as are any good, the Lord save us!

[*The STUDENTS make little acquiescent gestures and quiet themselves, as if they were accepting their fate. One of them, however, goes across to VALDEZ and speaks in a low tone.*]

SECOND STUDENT

Come on, tell us what you meant by it. [*He prods his finger into VALDEZ's side and makes a clucking sound. VALDEZ, without turning, puts his hand on his wrist and twists his arm, slowly but evidently with force, for the boy makes a face as if to howl.*] Hi, say—!

[*VALDEZ lets go. The boy puts his arm affectionately around VALDEZ's neck, no longer teasing. The others stand a moment smiling, until PACHO comes to hustle them along. He begins to push them as he hands out the tapers.*]

PACHO

Get in line, young gentlemen, come along, the procession will be starting soon. God knows, it's at a terrible hour, two o'clock, you know that; but it's the will of God, no doubt. Two o'clock, it's struck already. Here's a taper each. Look out they don't drip on you when you march, see? Here, try them out. [*He lights a taper and gives it to one of the*

boys. *The others in turn light theirs.*] Here, this one's wrong; candles are no good these days, since the war. Take another. There, try it; that's all right. Now blow 'em out. [*The boys blow out the tapers.* Meanwhile VALDEZ stands with his back to the audience, looking into the darkness and seeming to have forgotten the others. As PACHO gets the boys in line six of them are lifting the statue of the Virgin to their shoulders on poles. Now and then one of the others has run to the back of the portico and looked up the street, to see if anything is to be heard of the procession. They file out now to stage right, the statue leading the way.] Fall in line, young gentlemen, make a line! Can't you make a line? Line! You're not making a fever chart. [*From the Mexican quarter of the town you can hear the singing again, a very little less faint than before.* Then there comes a silence. When the STUDENTS are gone from sight up the street PACHO turns back into the portico. He sees VALDEZ stand there motionless still and looking in front of him, absently.] Señorito, you're going too? You don't mind this procession, do you, Señor? Last year you walked in it, I know. [*The sound comes of the music far off.*] It's pretty Spanish, yes; but then we've all got to have somewhere we came from. Everything has. It's an old custom here in this little place. Every year on Good Friday—I've seen it since I was a baby. You do like it well enough, Señorito, I think? No?

VALDEZ

[The music sounds louder.]

It goes on.

PACHO

Yes, Señor, it goes on. Your mother didn't, of course; she was an American. My mother walked in it, Rafaela di Dios, and her mother, Rafaela.

VALDEZ

That's what I like, Pacho. It goes on forever.

PACHO

Señorito, you've got some trouble on your mind tonight.

VALDEZ

[Shaking his head.]

No, Pacho.

PACHO

Señorito, you think too much. [VALDEZ makes a little gesture of despair.] It's always you're a long way off, Señor. [The music has faded away.] One looks at you and sees that you are not there. But it's all right, no doubt.

VALDEZ

Pacho, listen. Tell me why do the men here always try to tease me? You notice it. I don't mean I mind. But why is it?

PACHO

If that's what troubles your head——

VALDEZ

Not that—but I think of it——

PACHO

Why, anybody with eyes in his head could tell you that, Señor. [PACHO disappears through the gate a moment and reappears with a basket of flowers, which he begins to sort.] You must see they can't get you off their minds, and this is all they can do, tease. They'd lie down and die for you, every mother's son of 'em, he would.

VALDEZ

No, Pacho, what have I done?

PACHO

It's not what you've done, of course. Though, if it comes to that, any fool can tell you you're the star scholar here. [As he speaks he rises and goes over to the edge of the portico and looks about him.] Look at this rose, stems are all short this spring. But what does that matter on a Texas night like this, eh, Señor? These young gentlemen— [The music can be heard for three or four measures.]—it's that they just like you, that's it, and they feel you kind of far away. Everybody knows the bishop

said you'd cut a figure in the Church some day. And everybody knows you'll be writing books some day.

VALDEZ

I'm not so sure.

PACHO

Oh, you've got something the rest of 'em haven't got, Señorito; that's it. What is it you've got? I can't say it.

VALDEZ

Little enough.

PACHO

Not that you'd ever say as much. We're always going around this place thinking of the things you've never said. You said you'd been all your life on a ranch. What do the rest of them tell us? Everything. They're born in El Paso, they went to high school and took a prize for oratory, spelling, mathematics. They decided to become a priest, they came here. Everything they tell except some of their wickedness, no doubt. And you tell how much? Your mother was American. She died. Your father went back to Mexico often after that. You were alone for days. You rode with the cattle on the ranges. There were not many trees, and you were out a lot at night in the open by yourself. [Nodding.] Oh, yes, I know that, Señorito. It's a lot to know, ain't it?

VALDEZ

Well, that's about the difference.

PACHO

Between you and them. That's a world of difference, Señor, if you want to put it that way. You're near the rest of 'em the way a stream is near the banks, it touches the banks and it is far away from them. And it's plain you didn't stay on the farm forever, if you call that place and those days and nights a farm. And then, after a while, you wanted a life that seemed to come to something more complete. [VALDEZ *nods.*] Our blessed religion, Señor.

VALDEZ

To hold to something that could pull everything together. I had all those hours there with myself, but I kept losing hold. I didn't have enough to make something out of all I felt.

PACHO

It'll be all right, Señorito, I know.

VALDEZ

Things are what they are. I used to see that even then, while I was up there on the range. I've known that a long time.

PACHO

[*Looking at him a moment and then jerking up his head as he decides to change the subject.*]

You'll find the tapers in the sacristy. There're taller ones if you like. Lately, Señorito, you're always dreaming. In the sacristy, plenty of 'em. There's plenty of time. Take your time, Señorito. [VALDEZ goes in and closes the gate after him. *A few measures of the music can be heard.* PACHO mumbles to himself, with his eyes in the direction VALDEZ has gone.] Always talking about time and going on, and life never going back.

[*PACHO busies himself, sitting on the bench as he works. On the landing of the stair across the street three or four figures appear. One of the men carries a bright green cape on his arm. As they come nearer, the woman among them begins to peer down into the portico eagerly. She advances ahead of the others and comes down the steps faster than they in order to see better. The four of them reach the street outside the portico. The girl is beautiful, her step like an animal's, her whole body seeming to grow out of the earth and penetrated with its life, vividness, pride, vitality, fluidity.*]

A VOICE OFF-STAGE

Marietta, vien acca!

MARIETTA

Hasta la vista—te vayo mañana. Si.

[She turns to one of her companions, a tall dark man, and takes the cloak. She waves them a good-by to dismiss them and starts to enter the portico. The dark man tries to kiss her before he lets her leave them.]

MARIETTA

[Pushing him away quietly from her.]

No, no, you don't, monsieur. No, Dedaux.

[PACHO turns to see who has come, but at the sight of MARIETTA he steps back toward the wall, as if to ignore her presence there, and almost hiding himself around the corner. The men disappear down the street to the left. MARIETTA, when they are gone, comes into the portico happily. She seems to fall into a dream. The thought of being near VALDEZ brings a quietness over her and something gentle and sweet. She has not seen PACHO as he sits there on the bench with the flowers. She looks at the door, goes up and touches the bell chain, but does not pull it. She sighs "Ah," and relaxes into a gentle posture. When suddenly she sees PACHO she pulls herself together and turns insolently toward him.]

Well, look who's here. Darling Uncle!

PACHO

[Without looking up.]

Seen too much of you lately, querida mia, around here. What do you want?

MARIETTA

Say, you love me, don't you, Uncle? Yes, you do, like poison.

PACHO

I don't love your coming round here, you get that? Best thing you ever did, Miss, was to run off with that theater last year. It is a year, thank God! Best thing you can do now is to go with it to Mexico and not come hanging around us. Excuse me if I show my feelings.

MARIETTA

Us is good.

PACHO

Singing your damned songs on Good Friday, you and your crowd, as if we were all tramps.

MARIETTA

What's the matter with Thompson's Variety? It's the best in the Southwest, anybody'll tell you that. Got our own tents and our own company and —nobody that don't want to come has got to, you can bet on that, my dear.

PACHO

I saw you making eyes at the young gentleman.

my lady, the time you first came here to see me, last week, two weeks ago I think it was.

MARIETTA

What if I did? I'm my own boss.

PACHO

Why don't you get on to Mexico? You've been here long enough as it is. Two weeks can be a long time, my treasure.

MARIETTA

Tip Thompson waits here always till after Easter and then some if it suits him. He's not asking you when we take the show to Aguas Calientes, you know that.

PACHO

I don't know anything. But I'd like to know when I see you coming here. What do you want, my sister's child, God help me?

MARIETTA

Dearest Uncle, I want some flowers, of course.

PACHO

Well, take 'em and get out. [He holds up a handful of flowers. MARIETTA takes a few and puts them into her belt and one in her hair, looks at herself

gayly in a little pocket mirror.] Say, what do you want with Valdez, hey?

[*At the question, MARIETTA stops short her motions and becomes suddenly serious and severe.*]

MARIETTA

How do you know I want anything?

PACHO

You wouldn't be coming here to see me, I know that blame well. Are you gone on him? You want to drag him down to your dirt, do you; 'zat it? And that's low enough!

MARIETTA

I feel the way I feel. Every rotten man I run into's worryin' about my feelings!

PACHO

I know how you feel about every man you set your eyes on, my dear. Your mother told me that.

MARIETTA

And my mother told me you were an old bum and could have been a priest yourself if you hadn't been such a soak.

PACHO

Well, what of it? I had a year studying in a Jesuit College, it's true, where I at least saw the face

of philosophy, but the brandy got the best of me, so there we are with that. Yes, and it pleases God to paint my nose red as the cherubim. If we're going to make a family cockfight out of this, as my mother used to say, one nail drives out another. But that's not the point. What do you think, do you think you can understand such a man as he is, do you? [She turns on her heel.] What you don't know about him would make a book, my pet. In the first place, he grew up in the country and you're a town rat. You've heard people's chatter and seen things bought and sold. But you know precious little about the different meanings of the wind and trees and the stars at night, precious little, and if you were alone an hour you'd pop. Oh, yes. If you saw Valdez a while and saw how life takes him, you'd laugh to see something that you think is nothing, to see it mean so much to him. What you wouldn't know is that that only shows he's above any of us, that's all there is in that. You could go through any of it like a spoon through soup, as my mother used to say, without knowing the taste of it at all.

MARIETTA

Is that so!

PACHO

Might know the hot or cold, no doubt.

[He chuckles sarcastically.]

MARIETTA

He won't, I reckon. You'll see to that.

PACHO

I won't have to, my dear. You'll never get him. You can put that in your pipe and smoke it.

MARIETTA

What I know is he's not like you nor anybody else. Not like you nor anybody else.

PACHO

You like the notion of that, don't you!

MARIETTA

Who wouldn't? Anybody would. Don't you reckon I know he's different from the rest of you men? No woman's been inside of him.

PACHO

So that's what takes you. That's what you call being different.

MARIETTA

Nobody's been walking around in him, ah, no. I think about it all the time. There's something in him I can't get out of my mind. I'm always wondering about him, I swear I am. He's mixed me all up. I've prayed to God! [PACHO *glances up at her a second with a bit of sympathy in his eye, but jerks*

his head up scornfully.] I'm not good enough for him.

PACHO

I'll swear to that, all right.

MARIETTA

How do you know what I am, you old fool?

PACHO

Well, well, don't yell! Come on, get out of here! Nothing I can say will do any good. Your grandmother had another proverb, washing an ass's head is wasting soap and water.

MARIETTA

Every man I see knows what I am, even an old shrimp like you.

PACHO

I reckon you're the kind men know all about.

MARIETTA

Yes, you think you do, you damn men.

PACHO

Shh! Don't yell. And now come along. I've got to take these flowers to San José, promised. Hey! Come on with you! Vamos! Adios, eh?

MARIETTA

Adios.

[She turns and goes up the stair, and PACHO, after she is gone, carries his basket away and disappears down the street to the left. MARIETTA comes back into sight; she walks up and down in the street to the left, now seen, now gone. Far off music can be heard, a low beat of drums. When she hears the sound of footsteps inside the seminary she stands still, a little within the portico, and waits. When she hears the handle of the gate turn, she throws her head back and stands there as if some passionate angel were coming down to her. VALDEZ enters and drops the taper on the bench by the gate. He looks up and sees her there and opens his arms. She rushes into them. He does not put his arms around her but reaches up and takes her hands and draws them down slowly to his breast.]

VALDEZ

So you came?

MARIETTA

Sure, didn't I promise?

VALDEZ

Yes, you promised.

MARIETTA

Do you love me? [He catches her to him again. Then, after a moment, they are farther from each other and she stands before him with her hands clasped.] When you kiss me you don't seem so far away. You don't seem so like some angel——

VALDEZ

No, no—oh, no. Don't. [She frees herself gently and goes and sits down on the bench by the door, her head bowed and her hands clasped on her knees. VALDEZ sits beside her.] Tell me, what have you been doing all day?

MARIETTA

We've been rehearsing that pantomime Tip puts on every time the show goes to Mexico. It's an old thing, he got it down there somewhere. Mexican stuff. My, it's gay all right. I haven't got the snap for it. Not these days, at least.

VALDEZ

What's it about?

MARIETTA

Well, that's a question! At any rate, you sit there and the lovers come in, and the devil is there, and a lot of butting around. Dedaux is in it, see?

And Pigeons and others. I'm the youngest daughter. We'll give it at Aguas Calientes and Guadalajara, see?

VALDEZ

[*Absently.*]

Aguas Calientes—

MARIETTA

[*Throwing out her hands in a gesture of despair.*]

But what are we yapping here about that Mexico show when we ain't caring one rap about it? Are we?

VALDEZ

Why, Marietta, what is it? I was listening. I heard everything you said.

MARIETTA

It's not that. I didn't hear what I said myself. What I'm thinking about is us. And it's what I've been thinking about till my head splits. Us! We're sitting here not touching each other—trying to—and we can't live without each other— [*Almost sobbing.*] What are we going to do? Here you are, going to be a priest, in two more years you'll be a priest. Here I am, the beauty of a Variety Show. Oh, God!

VALDEZ

[*He throws himself down beside her, resting his arms straight across her knees.*]

Don't talk about it. I know.

MARIETTA

We've got to talk about it.

VALDEZ

We can wait.

MARIETTA

We can't go on from day to day——

VALDEZ

Oh, what does it matter—you are here?

MARIETTA

I love you.

VALDEZ

[*Moaning.*]

Oh, my dear!

[*She takes his head on her bosom as if he were a child. She strokes his hair.*]

MARIETTA

No, no. Now, then, we'll forget it. Don't be unhappy, my dear. My dear! Now! Now look, do you see I'm not crying any more. I'm not, honestly. I swear to God I'm not. [*He stands away from her,*

remaining on his knees, and then suddenly buries his face in his hands and rests them on her knees again. They are like lost children. Her face is drawn, her lips tremble. There is a long silence. Then suddenly she leans down over him and whispers.] Valdez— [He holds up his head and looks at her, confused. MARIETTA rises and holds out her hands for his.] Come on, let's go away from here. Let's leave here tonight.

VALDEZ

Go away?

MARIETTA

Yes, I can't come here any more. Pacho is watching me, if I come here, and you'll be seen—somebody'll be seeing you if you try coming to the lane again—or if you come to that wall behind San José. You know people's tongues—they must have seen you already. Besides, I'm going off in a few days, whenever they go, with The Show. You know that. We're going to Mexico. Oh, yes, you're going to be a priest in two more years. But you ought've thought of that sooner. You oughter thought o' that sooner, Valdez.

[Meanwhile he is walking up and down, up and down.]

VALDEZ

I've thought of nothing else—since I saw you.

MARIETTA

[*Making an impatient gesture, then throwing her arms around his neck and kissing him.*]

Will you come? What is there to think about if you love me?

VALDEZ

I love you.

MARIETTA

Will you come?

VALDEZ

I love you so much.

MARIETTA

[*As the music sounds.*]

Listen!

[*The sound of the music of horns is heard far off, a strange dirge, with drums, small drums, a music that is haunting and slow, spreading through the town. VALDEZ lets his arms sink slowly to his sides.*]

VALDEZ

Listen! [*She nods.*] How wild it is!

MARIETTA

[*Dumbly.*]

I hear.

VALDEZ

It's cruel, eternal, like the earth, the rocks, the sky, the night where everything lives. Oh, God!

[MARIETTA looks at him angrily and snatches up the taper.]

MARIETTA

[Thrusting the taper into his hand.]
Here, light this and go with them.

VALDEZ

You mean?

MARIETTA

I mean light your taper and go on.

VALDEZ

Marietta—?

MARIETTA

I mean making up this poetry dope at such a time as this and all. Gimme a match.

VALDEZ

Marietta—!

MARIETTA

Go on, that's right, write a book about it while we stand here. I stood on the bridge at midnight while the clock was striking the hour. . . . You've

forgotten me. I'm a mile away from you. Here, gimme a match! What's the use of it all, I'd like to know, when I'm always feeling something carrying you from me? What's the use when you're hitched to the moon? [VALDEZ raises his hand a little as if to ask silence and to hear the music.] I know. Oh, I hear it. Great Scott, I'm not deaf! But what does it matter about me? I don't count. I don't live in the sky. I'm not a blessed saint that goes around staring at the sky all the time. I'm only human, that's all I am!

VALDEZ

Marietta—!

MARIETTA

No matter. Match! I asked you for a match! [He takes a box of matches from his pocket and lights one. She takes it from his hand and puts it to the taper.] Here! Take it! Now—

[He stands there dumbly with his back to the street and the taper in his hand. MARIETTA turns away from him. She looks down the street to the right a moment, then turns back into the portico again quickly. The procession is already coming past. The students with their lighted tapers have already gone by, but VALDEZ does not turn to see them. They are followed by the Bishop with four boys holding his mantle. Priests and monks

follow, all bearing lights of some kind. VALDEZ turns and listens to the music of the horns and drums and pipes. He does not join in the procession as he might; he makes a start to do so, then throws out a hand with a gesture of fatality. MARIETTA stands half hidden in the gateway, her head bowed. She has unconsciously taken the flowers from her waist and laid them on the bench.

[VALDEZ stands there in the middle of the stage holding his taper lighted. The procession is coming past. Everyone carries a torch or a lantern made of paper on a staff, cut out in figures or colored, or a lighted taper. And every light is held down low at the waist of the bearer; darkness hovers over the heads and shoulders of the people as they move past. The effect is of lighted and luminous shapes moving along and throwing high shadows against the walls opposite. Now and then somebody comes down the stair and enters the line passing by, which is made up not only of two but sometimes three, four and even five persons walking together. The shrill pipe and the snare drum of the Virgin's band are heard louder; behind this, farther away, is the heavier music of the strange barbaric dirge played on the horns. The drums play a low, hypnotic tum-tum-tum, always

tum-tum, like the sound of a tom-tom in the desert. VALDEZ drops on his knees and stands there, for the statue of the Virgin with the swords in her bosom appears. He lifts both hands to her, straight up, like an archaic worshiper. *She has become a great idol, a goddess.* His first idea of passion, divine and human, is summed up in this Virgin, the life of whom culminates in her son and God, whose statue is to follow now and who died to atone for this struggle through which the soul exalts itself. The silver stars in her mantle are shining now in the lights, garlands of flowers are looped about the edges of her platform and lamps are burning around it. Over her head, far up, is a canopy of red velvet with gold tassels, the edges in wide scallops with gold fringe. This is carried by four men who walk on the outside of the bearers of the statue. The rhythm of the canopy differs from that of the statue, the lines of the high gilded poles conflict with the statue's lines. The still form of the image contrasts with the moving and luminous and shadowy forms below. The Virgin passes and more people file by. And then presently a new band playing the dirge appears; faintly echoing against it the first music comes from a street far ahead. And then appears the body of Christ,

taken down from the crucifix in the Cathedral. It is life size, and painted like flesh, with a white cloth about the loins, and the crown of thorns around the head from which the blood streams, and blood from the spear wound in the side also. The body lies in a glass coffin on a bier of dark red velvet. Lights with white globes burn around the bier, and garlands of flowers hang from it. He is the dead God, the friend of man, the tragic figure of the cruelty of life and death, the pain, the sense of time and the earth, of the dream, the rapture, the marble silence and pause following the vision that has been seen, this pitiful human thing who has died. VALDEZ, whose eyes have been lifted to the figure, is suddenly broken and buries his face in his hands. MARIETTA, leaning a little forward, has been watching both VALDEZ and the figure of Christ. Her hands are clasped before her breast. When VALDEZ buries his face in his hands, she holds out her hands slightly toward him and calls his name, as if she were calling a child. The body of Christ is carried on past and the music grows a little fainter. Meantime over the two people there the music pours, it swells and sinks, marches, bears on. Oh, mad, resolving music, in which all life is driven onward and blown into flame

and released and quieted at the same time!
[The actress who plays MARIETTA must feel suddenly in this mad, overwhelming thing a sense of shy desire to protect rather than possess this man she loves, a sense of something more maternal than passionate, something that forgets her own person in her concern for VALDEZ. To the actor who plays VALDEZ this music, rising from the town, the crowd, the night, which has already exalted him and freed him, becomes now more his body and the life of his body dilated, darkened, inexhaustible, that carries him and becomes the flood of his existence, and quiets and silences the outer aspect of him, as the rocks, the darkness, the earth, are silent, through which the power and life of nature runs. The procession continues to file by, the same lights, the same figures moving slowly. For a long time the procession passes. It should be seen passing across the stage for a long time, the exact length of time should be tried out at rehearsal; and during this interval the passing shapes and mostly the music break down the mood of the audience into that felt by the man there on the stage.
[The last figures of the procession are gone and darkness returns in the street outside.

After the procession there comes a silence again, with the faint sound of the horns and drums and of the feet of the crowd. MARIETTA, her anger long since gone, moves toward the street and looks after the procession timidly. VALDEZ leaves the taper burning there on the ground and rises to his feet slowly and blindly. MARIETTA goes toward him and touches his arm. VALDEZ makes a slight movement of turning away.]

MARIETTA

[Thinking of the figure of Christ and making a motion with her arm as if she were calling out to the body of Christ.]

No, no, I don't mean that. I don't want you to love me if it hurts you. I don't want you any more to go away with me. I love you so much. I want you to be happy. Like a child or a young saint. I came here to get you to go away, but that's all right, it's all right. Maybe I love you differently. It's all right. Tell me what it is that makes you suffer. I know, I know, my darling, that you are far away from me and are unhappy. I don't know how I know it, because I never knew anything before.

VALDEZ

[Staring at her.]

And what of you? What'll you do, Marietta?

MARIETTA

Oh, I'll be all right. I'll be a long way off, anyhow—I'll be like a woman's got a child dead, maybe. I don't know—don't you bother about me.

[VALDEZ *says nothing, but stands there dumb, looking at her.*]

MARIETTA

[*Speaking in a changed tone.*]

Eh? Say, you look sad, all right. Cheer up, I'm not going to run off with you. [VALDEZ *moves toward the street and stands with his back to the audience.* MARIETTA *withdraws to one side and sits on the bench by the gate, resting her palms beside her on the bench and looking at him, not knowing just what the meaning of it all is.* VALDEZ *makes a sudden movement with one hand as the music of the procession breaks out again from some echoing street.*] They're going back now to San José.

[*The music is mournful, sensuous, passionate and dark as it comes from the low rumble of the procession, the drums sound tum-tum-tum, far off, barbaric against the horns, in the late night.* VALDEZ *listens to it, his body stiffens all over.* Domination, male passion, possession, move him. *The music continues.* MARIETTA *rises to her feet but without taking a step.* In her hand she has the bouquet of flowers which has found its way there some-

how as she sat on the bench. At length Valdez turns slowly and mechanically toward Marietta and holds one hand a little way out.]

VALDEZ

Come, we must go.

[He takes a step or two toward the street.]

MARIETTA

[Holding her hand slightly out but not taking a step.]

Oh, no; don't you reckon it might be better to stay here? I mean you stay here, Valdez; it's all right. Honestly, I'm all right. Let me go on; I'm sure it'll be better all round. Won't you?

VALDEZ

[Catching her to him passionately for a moment and then turning toward the street.]

We must go.

[He starts off slowly to the street, leaving her to follow.]

MARIETTA

You go, then.

VALDEZ

No!

[He moves on. She steps forward without any burst of joy. The bouquet of flowers from

the bench is in her hand still. A few feet away, she stands for a moment, then throws the bouquet against the door of the seminary. The flowers are scattered on the floor. VALDEZ can be seen going slowly up the stair opposite. MARIETTA follows him. For a moment he is seen in the glow of light on the landing, and then she is seen, and then both disappear in the shadow. You can hear faintly until the curtain falls the far-off dirge in the streets, the drums, the horns, and the little pipes coming in with a mad, shrill voice now and then. The taper that VALDEZ has left there on the floor burns, the one moving thing in this surrounding night. After a little and faintly the first light of dawn appears, almost imperceptible, and shows most along the ground outside.]

CURTAIN

ACT II

SCENE: A room off the stage of Tip Thompson's Variety Show while it is playing in Aguas Calientes. The room consists of canvas hanging straight down from a framework of pipes, like a vast shower bath. There is a rather low canvas ceiling stretched across overhead, which the plumes of the cart stage standing there almost touch. This cart stage is an elevated platform on wheels, and upon it takes place the pantomime. Gaudy cloths with gilt tinsel fringe a foot deep are looped about it, almost hiding the wheels on which it is moved around. Across the top of this cart stage is a canopy with looped up borders hanging down on the sides, fixed to four gilded poles that rise from the four corners of the platform. Crowning these poles are great metal plumes painted in bright colors.

The remainder of the stage is empty, except for a long trestle table running along the wall to the right, leading into the auditorium, and a short flight of steps in the left corner at the back. On the table stand some poor looking-glasses and a clutter of make-up materials and

costume odds and ends. The room is lighted with great branches, like hatracks, of acetylene lamps; there are two of these lamps, one on the left between the cart stage and the wall, one toward the wall, and near the front on the right.

Outside this room, beyond it at the back, the auditorium for the spectators is dark. Various pieces of costume and hats are to be seen. The members of the troupe are about the stage, singly and in groups, twenty or thirty of them, getting themselves into shape for the rehearsal and the performance. Among them stands AMERICAN PIGEONS, who in the show has an act with trained pigeons. She is a woman who has a manner and a way of speaking that are violent and rough. But there is visible, beneath these external impressions that she gives, a kind of tragic beauty and an honesty of feeling that has a certain distinction and pathos about it. She is the eternal grotesque, whose outer self is an unchanging mockery of the inner. She has, as she stands there talking with DEDAUX, her blond wig in her hand, and her skirt is tucked up in places to keep the train from dragging on the floor.

DEDAUX, the knife thrower, a French Creole, wears a black suit, satin trousers running down and catching under the arch of the foot, in the style of 1833, and an evening coat and lace

yellow. His cool, bewitching eyes give the color of mystery. He is the mask of life in its animal form, not coarse, not ugly, but cruel, compelling, unscrupulous. His movements are easy and flowing and relaxed, and yet full of security and strength. Against him the surrounding life beats, is drawn toward him, is destroyed.

The people on the stage are scattered with a few Mexicans, setting the needs of the scene.

Tir Thompson, the manager and owner of the show, will appear presently from the left rear of the stage, directing the arrangement of some boxes, one of which will be put near the east stage and partly under it, for the use of the musician. It is a box painted red, with a double bottom, used by the knife thrower for his tricks.

Tir Thompson is a big man with red hair and a ruddy face and broad Texas drawl. The streak of artist in him breaks out in two spots: a large ring with a Mexican eagle and instead of a belt a striped serpent around his waist. Otherwise, seen from the outside he might be any ruddy Texas fellow. Essentially, however, Tir is a grotesque, as Piersons is: he is a mask under which life moves, a rough cast above a tender, bony, warm creature within.

Down near the footlights, at the stage right, Deyark and Piersons are talking.

DEDAUX

Be quiet, will you! They'll be hearing you. We've had enough of this already.

PIGEONS

What are you trying then to do to Valdez? Why can't you let Marietta alone?

DEDAUX

Oh, hell!

PIGEONS

You and that woman, between the two of you you've got him so stirred up he can't do his part in the show. He's all in and out and all broken up.

DEDAUX

Shh! shh!

TIP

[*Getting the rehearsal started.*]

All right, come on, everybody!

[*PIGEONS crosses over to stage left and stands there at the corner of the cart, putting on her wig. DEDAUX moves toward the rear and mingles with the crowd that is there.*

[*In the second of silence that follows after DEDAUX and PIGEONS stop talking, you hear the sound of paper tearing grotesquely across*

the moment. The FIRST DAUGHTER in the pantomime, standing just behind the spot where DEDAUX and PIGEONS stood, is tearing up a sheet of newspaper and stuffing it into her bosom to improve her figure.]

TIP

Come on, now, everybody, le's git this thing in shape. I swear I'll dance at your weddin' if you do this for me right. It was better last season than it's been lately. For this last performance le's rehearse it and make a try. Our last performance in our Mexico Season, Ladies and Gentlemen. Say, Carlo's act comes last and it's a good thing he at least gits a hand. He deserves it, the way they hooped him up last night, and that's a part of the eternal justice, I reckon. All right, come on! I want more style to it. Maybe I'm a blame fool but this here piece is a pet o' mine, maybe it's my career, see? All right! [To himself.] Though I guess nobody's exactly hog wild about it. [He gives the lamp near him, as he stands to the right of the cart, a jerk, and pumps the light up to an added flare.] All right for the famous suitors of Seville. All right. Where's Carlo?

FIRST DAUGHTER

Will we be doing it next year, Tip, again?

TIP

Every time we come back to Mexico we're doing it, my darling.

FIRST DAUGHTER

Lord knows I'd rather act Julius Cæsar.

TIP

I'd rather have you act him, little girl. You couldn't be worse. [*There is some laughter among the company.*] But who else have I got sep you? All right, where's Carlo? Valdez? [VALDEZ turns from where he has been standing at the dressing-table, with his back to the audience and comes forward toward the steps leading up in front on the left side to the platform of the cart. He is dressed up in a big cape and other gallant properties of bright, cheap stuff.] Now, music!

[*A man with an accordion who has been sounding notes from it now and then at the back of the stage, comes up and sits down close to and in the shadow of the right side of the platform. He strikes up an operatic and orchestral piece on the accordion. The actors move toward the cart stage.*]

[*Crossing to left.*]

All right, all right, Old Man, all right, Doctor. Here, American Pigeons, your basket's all right, you stand here and watch the light for me, jerk it when I give you the sign, hey? And be ready with your

gun, Pigeons! All right, Old Man—come on, come on, it's nearly show time, le's git it.

[*On the cart stage the comic OLD DOCTOR, with thin hair long and gray and half bald, and with square spectacles, stands behind a counter on which are grotesque and exaggerated files of folios and bottles, painted mostly on flat cardboard. At the front of the cart stage to the audience's left, in three high-backed chairs set close together, are the THREE BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTERS, dressed exactly alike in billowy, balloony costumes, a little soiled and the worse for wear but all in white, powdered, painted up like dolls.*]

TIP

All right, first Gallant, come on. [*The first of the GALLANTS approaches the cart, makes a bow to the young lady furthest from the end, then mounts the steps, pays exaggerated court to her.*] Hell, lay it on thick, thick, suitor, swing it!

[*The GALLANT with a great swirl presents a small nosegay and a fan. The DAUGHTER meanwhile coyly puts on a lace mask. Then the OLD FATHER sees them; he chases the GALLANT away by hitting him with a great slapstick. PIGEONS fires the pistol. At this the young lady weeps into her handkerchief, and drops it on the ground below the cart,*

and the GALLANT picks it up and sweeps it to his bosom as he passes. SUITOR NUMBER Two repeats almost identically this wooing, to the SECOND MAIDEN, and is also driven away by the OLD MAN, with the slapstick. PIGEONS fires the pistol. The man with the accordion stops playing whenever TIP breaks in with interruptions.]

TIP

'S'all right, 's'all right, go on, keep going.

[*The SECOND MAIDEN weeps into her handkerchief as the first had done and drops it, and the handkerchief is picked up by the SECOND SUITOR as the first had done, and swept to his bosom. The THIRD SUITOR comes up to the THIRD DAUGHTER, makes greater court than the others; he is more splendidly dressed, with huge sword, rosettes, embroidered cape, hat festooned with paper pompons; he carries an absurd little sunshade and a huge bouquet of grotesquely mixed flowers, daisies, poppies, sunflowers, weeds and so on. He presents these to the THIRD DAUGHTER with a great bow.]*

TIP

That's it, by Gimini, that's the ticket! Everybody do like Carlo there. [Meanwhile, VALDEZ having made his bow, stands looking at MARIETTA with a

light in his eyes that is not a part of the pantomime. His whole body relaxes and the acting has almost vanished from his presence as he stands looking at her.] All right—all right, Third Daughter, come on with it—more style!

[*The THIRD DAUGHTER, who is MARIETTA, shakes her foot impatiently.*]

MARIETTA

I understand all right. My God!

[*She speaks sharply to VALDEZ, annoyed at his manner toward her and the amount of feeling that he allows to appear.*]

Valdez——!

VALDEZ

I beg your pardon.

[*He jerks himself back into the style and bearing of the part.*]

TIP

All right; all right! You're all right, Carlo. Jes come out of your dreams, old man. Now! Once again! All right!

[*The THIRD SUITOR makes the bow again and presents his bouquet and sunshade. The MAIDEN takes them possessively and as a matter of course. The OLD MAN drives him off with his stick. PIGEONS fires the pistol. The THREE DAUGHTERS now all weep. Then*

MARIETTA, handing one of the daughters the sunshade to hold, presents each one of them with a tiny daisy plucked from her mammoth bouquet. Then she takes her sunshade back again, purses up her mouth, and sits complacently. Meanwhile the OLD DOCTOR's absorption with his science is rewarded by a terrific explosion, not noisy but sending up huge volumes of smoke. At this all the maidens start, and seeming to regard the explosion as a personal attack begin to sniff again. But they appear with time to be able to comfort themselves and once more are settled into repose. The THREE SUITORS have meanwhile taken counsel and are busily disguising themselves in the most absurd manner thinkable as cripples, afflicted with such Rabelaision diseases as might require for their alleviation the instruments exhibited on the doctor's counter. The FIRST SUITOR limps forward to the cart, staggers up the steps, applies to the OLD DOCTOR for First Aid to the Injured——]

TIP

[Holds up his hand, the accordion stops.]
First Aid to the Injured, make it more desperate.
[The SUITOR obeys, repeats his plea and is cured by the application of those medieval remedies

on the counter, and springs about rejoicing. As the SECOND SUITOR limps up in his turn toward the DOCTOR, the first throws off his disguise, bears the willing first lady down the steps and away to the left of the stage. The SECOND SUITOR repeats this elopement exactly as VALDEZ limps up, in extremis; and since the OLD MAN is totally absorbed now in counting the money that the Two SUITORS have given him, entering the amounts in a Gargantuan ledger with a great quill, and pays no attention to the THIRD PATIENT, VALDEZ looks about him and prescribes his own treatment; he shoots himself in the arm with the mammoth syringe, is instantly rejuvenated, and rushes on his own account for the THIRD DAUGHTER, and runs away. The OLD MAN recovers himself, notices that the MAIDENS have flown, dashes down the steps and chases all six of the romantics back on to the cart, where they huddle together to the left corner front. At this the OLD MAN shakes his finger at them and makes a gesture to ask if their intentions are honorable, the accordion plays the wedding march.]

TIP

Clasp your hands, Suitors, to show your intentions are honorable, as he asks you.

[*The Suitors clasp their hands as if making a vow. The OLD MAN makes a gesture of abandoning them all to their fates and turns away to his desk. As he reaches over and closes a great ledger there, the DEVIL, who has been sitting the while on the side lines to the left waiting his cue, claps on his mask, dashes on to the cart stage and waving his hellfire made of silk flames tied on a stick, begins to jump up and down wildly on a springboard at the back of the cart.*]

TIP

Hey! [*The accordion stops.*] Hi, put some pep in that, will you? Now up, come on—— [*The DEVIL, who has not heard well, comes sulkily to the front of the stage and takes off his mask and leans down.*] Where in Hell'd you get that?

THE DEVIL

[*Who is DEDAUX the KNIFE THROWER, and speaks with a slight accent now and then.*] What in Hell is it?

TIP

This a way! Wave yo' hellfire!

[*Makes a gesture with his arms to show how it ought to be done.*]

THE DEVIL

I understand. More extravagance, non?

TIP

Exactly, monsieur, for the love of Sam Hill.

[*The Devil nods and starts back to his place.*

PIGEONS gives the lights another jerk and they flare up as the Devil does his trick so overpoweringly that the OLD MAN and the LOVERS are all in terror and run away and leave the Devil triumphant.]

TIP

Well, that's better. But come on, let's try that business over, Third Suitor, and the presents for the Third Daughter; all right, Carlo and Marietta, would you oblige me by taking your places once again. Just a minute.

[*VALDEZ by this time has taken off the hat, the mustache and the white make-up and comes forward from among the people standing about on the stage to the left and mounts on to the cart. His face is drawn and sad, but when he strikes the acting realm, there on the cart, he begins, as an artist, to take on another air. He takes his place on the cart. MARIETTA half mounts the steps and stands there, looking back as TIP speaks.]*

TIP

Now watch this, you people in the show.

[*Several Players, the Daughters and Suitors, et cetera, draw up to look on and to listen to what Tip is saying.*]

First thing, as I've told you till my tongue's hangin' out, mind your walk, everything begins in the feet. The art of acting—listen at me talkin' art stuff, chillun?—as I've told you, stands in your shoes. All right now, come on! [VALDEZ makes the bow, and then looks round, inquiringly.] Yours is all right, Carlo, what I want is the Daughter's. Kid, don't look at him as if you could knock his head off. Easy. There, accept it coolly, like a woman that would accept the earth as she would a pound of candy. [With some vanity over his remarks.] There's plenty of 'em accept it as they'd accept two pounds, I reckon; cool as a cucumber, by George! [MARIETTA acts out his idea.] Now—that's it. All right.

[*As the rehearsal winds up the room has been scattering to its various affairs. DEDAUX, who has been the Devil, takes off his red robes and appears in his black evening clothes. VALDEZ is fooling about at his dressing-table, absently putting on touches of make-up. He leans on his elbow as he gazes into an old mirror there on the table. DEDAUX, further down the dressing-table, in*

the rear of VALDEZ, is looking proudly at himself in the glass before him. VALDEZ turns and looks at him. DEDAUX, feeling the eyes of VALDEZ upon him, turns sharply and rises. For a moment the two men stand glaring at one another, full of their rivalry and the tension between them; then DEDAUX sits insolently down and goes back to his mirror. VALDEZ, after a moment's pause, turns and goes out at the back of the tent. Presently DEDAUX turns sharply, for he has seen in the glass that PIGEONS is looking at him from where she stands in front of the cart stage. She has had her eye on him during the whole pantomime, especially when he went near other women. He coolly rises, picks up his basket of knives and begins to throw them against the cart, three or four of them. Then, seeing her eye still fixed on him, he walks insolently over to where she stands. She moves abruptly up to him, and finally by bending her knee knocks him with it as she shrugs her shoulder.]

PIGEONS

You rotter! That's what you are. Aren't you ashamed of yourself?

DEDAUX

Oh, get to Hell!

PIGEONS

I won't, see? Oh, I know what you're up to, you big stiff. You think you're getting away with everything you like, eh? Well, you're not, my little cutie, but you're not. I see you and there're others beside me who see you. People ain't all gone blind. You ought to be ashamed of yourself.

DEDAUX

[*Lighting a cigarette and flipping at the ash.*] Ashamed of what? However, who cares?

PIGEONS

Go ahead, shrug your French shoulders. All right. You know what I'm talking about well enough. You know it's a dirty trick hanging around that woman.

DEDAUX

Teenie or Jane?

PIGEONS

Teenie or Jane, hell! Everybody knows you've jipped them long ago. You're through with them. Just as you cut your nails; it's snip first one of us off and then another. Well, it's Marietta, I mean. I know what you're after. You ruined Valdez, you

sure done him up in a shuck I can tell you! But I don't have to. I reckon you know it well enough.

DEDAUX

[*With a contemptuous chuckle.*]
Carlo!

PIGEONS

You know he'd die for her in a second, lie down and let her wipe her feet on him. More fool he! She's rotten, too, if you ask me. Too good for her, 's what he is! And she cares a lot about him, she does not. But I'd say just the same she might care something about him if you'd keep out of it.

DEDAUX

Yes, the point is who's asking you? [*Half mimicking her.*] If you ask me! Who's asking you?

PIGEONS

I know your tricks with women. Oh, my God, I know them only too well.

DEDAUX

Oh, don't start that tune for God's sake. We've heard enough of it. [*PIGEONS slaps at the hand that he has raised. He catches her wrists and grips them till she drops to her knees.*] Shh! can't you? You'll have everybody listening in, you fool. Besides, if you're out of it, what in Hell do you care?

PIGEONS

[*Hurt with the pain of his strength and the pain of her love.*]

Perhaps I am, perhaps I'm not, perhaps I do, perhaps I don't. He's a good kid, he is; you got to let his girl alone, I tell you! Why can't you find a woman for yourself, like anybody else?

DEDAUX

[*Cuttingly.*]

Who, for example; could you think of anyone?

PIGEONS

He's a saint, the poor fool!

[DEDAUX turns and picks up a knife, throws it at the platform of the cart, and walks away, disappearing through the people at the back of the stage. PIGEONS sits down sullenly on the ladder-steps of the cart.

[You can hear a noise off and on of people coming into the audience part of the tent. Presently MARIETTA enters from her dressing-room on the left, in front. She is ready for her act, and is dressed in a Spanish costume, in the Andalusian style; a dress with ruffles up to the knees, high off the floor in front and with a long train behind. As she approaches, VALDEZ turns and looks at her. He tries to make casual conversation.]

VALDEZ

You're all dressed and ready.

MARIETTA

[*Nodding.*]

Ah ha.

[*She remains standing near him as if held by something that will keep her there.*]

VALDEZ

You come almost first, and my number is the last.

MARIETTA

Best last.

VALDEZ

Oh, no, hardly. There's Dedaux first, throwing his knives ; then you ; then who ?

MARIETTA

American Pigeons. You know that.

VALDEZ

Of course. I forget everything.

MARIETTA

Charlie Chaplin's addled your head. [VALDEZ gives a kind of sniff as if to express an irony toward himself and life.] Why do you do this Chaplin stunt, Valdez ? I hate it—it makes a hit, but I don't

care, I hate it. Why do you? [VALDEZ makes no answer.] And if you go'n'o do it, why do you make such a long face over it; Charlie Chaplin's not sob stuff. God, he makes me sick! [She stands there lightly, looking down at her shawl and arranging the fringes. VALDEZ looks long at her.]

MARIETTA

[Impatiently.] Valdez, for goodness' sake don't look at me so!

VALDEZ

I forget. [She gives a little shiver and is a trifle nearer him.] Are you cold?

MARIETTA

No, I'm hot, if I'm anything.

VALDEZ

Let's see. [He reaches out and takes hold of her hand.] Your hands are cold enough.

MARIETTA

If they are it's because I've been washing them. You've got to wash your hands in this business. [She leaves her hand limp in his grasp. He reaches out his other arm and draws her by her waist to him. She snatches her hand from him and gives him a sharp slap on the cheek and draws back toward the wall.] You make me sick!

[VALDEZ leaps to his feet as he catches his palm to his cheek, but his anger is gone as soon as it came, and he sits down again. MARIETTA is frightened for a second and crouches downward; but, seeing that she is safe, she regains her air of cool aloofness and walks past him as TIP appears. PIGEONS, from where she has kept on the far side of the cart, has seen everything, and now rises and goes round the cart to the left and stands with her eyes on MARIETTA till the latter is gone. TIP calls to a man in the group at the back.]

TIP

Hey, tell Henry to run the lights up in the house. Don't he see the crowd coming in? What's he think they are, cave dwellers? [Meanwhile as he speaks the men begin to push out the cart stage through an opening made by sliding the canvas of the right wall aside, where it hangs from rings on a rod. The cart disappears and the men draw the curtain after them. The stage is empty save for VALDEZ and TIP. A mass of figures is silhouetted, however, against the canvas from the outside at the back, where members of the troupe and others are standing off stage. Their shifting shadows darken the rear wall. TIP goes over to the right and lowers somewhat the lamps there.] Just as well to keep the

light for the audience, I guess. [He comes over to where VALDEZ sits looking in the mirror at his own white face. Throughout this scene TIP, under a rough outside is trying to tell VALDEZ that he understands and is sorry. But he never quite gets this said. The actor who plays TIP should not play this scene with sentiment.] Can I do anything for you, old man?

VALDEZ

Oh, no, that's all right, Tip.

TIP

I'm right troubled about you. Can see you're pretty low, I reckon. Least ways, you're not easy about something. Is it women? Don't let 'em get to you. You got to run a business like mine to know how much trouble they can be. [VALDEZ says nothing and there is a silence.] You're sure not bothered over your profession, I reckon. Any man as has had your success. And right off, too. I knew it at the very first lick, first time you tried the Charlie Chaplin stunt. You put your money on that pony, I says to Pigeons. [He lays his hand on VALDEZ's shoulder.] You'll go ahead, old man. Man says to me the other night—big ganglin' Mexican with a diamond in his shirt. Say, he says, Carlo's a great lil' feller. Yep, I says, he jes keeps a goin' like a piece of music—know what that feller says to me then? says, he jes keeps a goin' like your own inside,

's what he says. That's jes it, I says, him and his Charlie Chaplin.

VALDEZ

God knows, I can't complain of the audiences.

TIP

Well, of course I know it wa'n't so fine at the start. Say, looked like when you were the funny bum they didn't care nothin' about you, hey? Blame near a failure, yes siree. Then you done the Charlie Chaplin stunt, and they went crazy pretty near. Say, whyn't you do it sooner, son? At any rate, I can't see why you got the dumps, honestly. Say, you looked happier when you was the bum; if you was a failure.

VALDEZ

I was, Tip, I was happier.

TIP

Hey? It's Marietta then. That was my guess all along. 'Scuse my pokin' my nose in your business, old man; but, if it's this bird Ddeaux, whyn't you knock the stuffin' out o' him? I'll back you in it, kid. I'd like nothin' better'n to give him a frailin', and a good un. He's made trouble enough in this camp already, last year with two of 'em and Pigeons besides. 'S on account of Ddeaux and his hangin' round Marietta's got Pigeons so swelled up lately. By George, her act's got rotten enough. How can

you expect the audience to like it when even the pigeons themselves can feel her crabbin' at 'em and act like chickens scarin' off! Pigeons 's lookin' ten years older'n she did, don't you think? But it's hard to say anything to Pigeons—she's not just theater folks, you know. Pigeons comes from quite a aristocratic family, you listen to me. Pigeons had quite a slide down in this world, you know. Poor kid! Quite a drop!

VALDEZ

Women like him.

[*Applause comes from the audience's direction.*]

TIP

There, the audience is giving him a hand now, he's a good one at that knife throwing of his, you'll have to hand him that.

VALDEZ

Yes.

TIP

Yes, and the women like him, all right. You jes got to look at him to see why. He's a handsome baby, he is; great, ganglin' chap! But I wouldn't give three dollars Mexican for a dozen like 'im.

VALDEZ

Ddeaux's like a fine animal, Tip. His body is like silk.

TIP

Oh, dang your silk.

VALDEZ

And what he wants he takes. He's never ridiculous.

TIP

Never ridiculous, no; if I get what you mean. But you're not either, if that's what you mean.

VALDEZ

I may be.

TIP

Course you're not. Well, what's Marietta got against you, anyway?

VALDEZ

She saw something in me that she loved and now she doesn't.

TIP

That's a whalin' argument, ain't it!

VALDEZ

Good enough. If you need an argument.

[*A fairly loud applause is heard.*]

TIP

There, he's done. Dedaux can make them look at him. Marietta'll come on now. We've got to say

in that Spanish stuff she's a sweetheart to look at, and no mistake, and her voice is fair enough.

VALDEZ

Her voice has something in it that I've heard on the prairies.

TIP

That's what gets these Mexicans, I reckon. They're wild tots right enough. [*The sound of applause.*] There she is. Now she'll do her little song and dance. Or rather dance and song. Oh, come on, man, you're not going to jes set here and let him take her from you! A man like you?

VALDEZ

Tip, I'll tell you——

TIP

What?

VALDEZ

I've learned that nothing I can take is worth much in the end. I've learned that much from the natural world, up there in the country.

TIP

The natural world. By Gimini Christmas, you're always learning something from the natural world. How do you mean, that you can take?

VALDEZ

I must receive and must give. At the mouth of

our canyon there was a pool of water and some trees by it. I used to notice how the trees took the wind when it blew, and how some of the shape they had came from the wind. I used to watch the deer off on the hill and the mountain lions when I saw them and used to see how they followed what was in them and got to be a part of the world around. From the light and the rocks that they lived in they got their eyes and speed. What counted in the long run was the thing they became, not what they could go out and take or try to snatch. [With a shy smile.] Do you see, Tip?

TIP

Yes, I do, like hell! [TIP sits down on the dressing-table.] I'm not strong on this nature study, I reckon. Say, listen, old man. Like as not it's because I'm a Texas feller, but if I was you, I'd no more put up with such a deal'n I'd—but you're's much Texas as I am, I reckon—anyhow, I'd no more—if I was you I'd no more—there, she is singing. [The sound of MARIETTA's voice comes from the far room. Both men listen for a moment.] That's *La Golandrina*—by God, you'd think she meant it. [Suddenly, as if to hide his own feeling.] You're a nut, all right. Is there anything I can do for you, old man?

[VALDEZ reaches out and touches his arm a moment, but says nothing.]

VALDEZ

Maybe she does. [He rises slowly to his feet and stands there looking down while the song proceeds. TIP makes a slight motion as if to do something to help VALDEZ but gives it up and sits waiting for the song to end.] That's the way she sings it.

TIP

Say, listen, be human! You got the first claim. Eating your heart out like this!

VALDEZ

No, no. Unless she, too, comes to me——

[The song goes on and ends. The sound is heard of hearty applause.]

TIP

[Standing up.]

There, she's over, say, put up a scrap, go on and get her.

VALDEZ

You see, there's something in the song I can take, and I have taken; but not the singer.

TIP

[After a moment.]

Well, you beat me. Anything I can do for you, old man?

VALDEZ

Thank you, Tip. [As he seats himself with his face away from the audience.] I'll get on with the make-up.

TIP

An' I'll take a look at the crowd. [Going out on the left.] All right——

[The music outside plays, you hear it not very loudly. Presently VALDEZ, having taken his hat and ruff from the rack and thrown his cloak over his arm, gets ready to go out. He pulls off the light near him, leaving only the lowered light on the left side of the stage. He turns and walks not fast, not slow, but with a certain absent and more or less mechanical motion toward the rear. The glow of light outside at the back has grown brighter with the dimming of the stage; it is especially glowing up some distance from the floor, due to the light that shines over the stage walls in the auditorium. In the dimness VALDEZ is seen moving toward the back wall where the shadow looms of the people beyond it, and his figure fades into the shadow of this crowd. The show music is still heard and on the empty scene appears to be louder.]

CURTAIN

ACT III

When the curtain rises the canvas wall in the rear glows somewhat more brightly than when it was last seen; for there are no longer any people behind to throw their shadows against it. There is something of a great moon-stone about the place; it has its dreams, tawdry though they be. The pantomime is over, as you can see by the bottles and bright clothing piled together on the floor and on the rack toward the far end of the dressing-table. The red DEVIL's costume that Dedaux wore can be seen hanging over a chair to the left at the front of the stage.

In the left back corner, at the head of the flight of steps that leads down from the platform outside, VALDEZ appears. A little wistful lost figure. He has taken off the pantomime cape and hat and now wears an old torn rain-coat that hides his outline. He comes forward slowly and wanders about the middle of the stage, aimlessly; and after a while, with an almost imperceptible start he recollects himself and turns to the dressing-table. He stands on the far side of the stool and begins to fit his feet into some shoes that are lying there. He

puts on then an old coat with a tail. As he stands there, slowly getting himself ready for his act, TIP appears from the rear door on the left and calls to him.]

TIP

Ready, old man? Believe me, boy, they are waiting for you tonight. [Rubbing his hands together in artistic delight.] Oh, man! Say, I wonder you'll speak to the rest of us, looks like you wouldn't.

VALDEZ

I'll be ready. I'll be ready in time.

TIP

All right. How's the make-up tonight? [VALDEZ finishes sticking on his mustache and turns to TIP, he has become Charlie Chaplin.] Good. By George! Say, he's a great little fellow, ain't he, no matter what they say; always makes me want to cry like a damn fool, and I'll swear you look like him all right. Wal, you'll come on soon, won't you? And I'll wait for you here a little later, eh? I mean when the show's over, eh?

[TIP goes out and the figure of Charlie Chaplin pulls itself together, comes forward a few steps and then back and goes up the stair toward the stage and disappears. Almost immediately DEDAUX comes in through the right

rear door that TIP has just passed through. He comes forward and listens for a moment at the right front, near the dressing-table. Then he whistles and as MARIETTA enters from her dressing-room on the right front, he speaks to her, not very loud.]

DEDAUX

They're gone, come on in. [He leans over VALDEZ's dressing place and with a towel there begins to wipe some of the rouge off his face. As he gives her a glance—] So she's got the Spanish on again, eh?

MARIETTA

That other business is too cold to sit around in, dressing in clouds is all right for birds but not for me.

[She comes forward and stands at the end of the table looking on at DEDAUXT's toilet with an air of teasing admiration. Underneath this banter and sensual movement, however, which MARIETTA has found to be the only way to hold DEDAUXT, there is a kind of fluttering terror and the dread of his slipping from her. She hates and loves him passionately. DEDAUXT looks at her insinuatingly.]

MARIETTA

No doubt, he's a beauty all right.

DEDAUX

[*Rising.*]

At any rate I know who is.

MARIETTA

[*Pushing him away lightly with her hand.*]

No, now, now! You hate yourself, don't you?

[*She looks saucily into his eyes as she turns her head toward him but with great suppressed excitement.*]

DEDAUX

I swear I do love you.

MARIETTA

You swear that to them all.

DEDAUX

It's different.

MARIETTA

[*Eluding him.*]

No, no, Dedaux.

DEDAUX

I'll kill myself if you won't love me. I'll stab myself, Marietta. You've got to love me, you beauty.

MARIETTA

Talking like a theater, non?

DEDAUX

You know if I am or not.

[*He has turned away to his mirror. MARIETTA stops still and looks steadily at him, quietly too, with more concern and anxiety than she wants to show. DEDAUX gets all the rouge and make-up off and stands looking at her, pale and steady, with Creole gravity. She seems reassured, for she suddenly reverts to her old shrug and bursts into a laugh.*]

MARIETTA

He's a French flirt, look out! Hello, Armand!

DEDAUX

I love you.

MARIETTA

[*Leaning, half sitting, on the edge of the dressing-table.*]

Monsieur!

DEDAUX

I love you.

MARIETTA

Say, he'll just repeat it like that, no woman could hold out!

DEDAUX

You do love me, I know you do.

MARIETTA

Oh, knows it! Say, you hate yourself, don't you! Well, stop being silly. You know I'm married. I'm as good as married. Same as married. What's the difference?

DEDAUX

Tell me, don't you love me? I could not bear my life without you!

MARIETTA

You read novels, don't you, Dedaux! Every man I run into lately 's literary. We all know you get this stuff out of novels and we all swallow it just the same. Why the smile?

DEDAUX

Nothing. Just a thought in my head.

MARIETTA

What?

DEDAUX

I was smiling to think what a silly little fool he is.

MARIETTA

No, no, Dedaux.

DEDAUX

Why, what is it?

MARIETTA

No, cut that now. I may be sick of it. And I hate this Charlie Chaplin stuff; makes me nervous when he starts it. But I won't let you say that about him. It hits me. Because I know he made me, the only time I was ever worth a rap. That night—

DEDAUX

[Coolly lighting his cigarette.]
Gave her her soul, think of that!

MARIETTA

If I ever had one. If I ever had a soul.

DEDAUX

As you must have had, mais non alors par exemple!

MARIETTA

And then he took me and it was just like the rest of you. In bed with a woman you men are all alike. Well, maybe some men are different but I never saw 'em. When it comes to this business. Valdez was like the rest of you. God! I wish he—! Only, he never lets me have any peace.

DEDAUX

She talks as if he had violated her, the virgin heart!

MARIETTA

What if I do! What do you know about it?
There might be more'n one kind of virginity, I
reckon.

DEDAUX

Meaning lifted to pure heights you were, the
realms of shining white?

MARIETTA

Use your words as much as you like. I know you
read novels, you don't have to show me, my dear.

DEDAUX

[*Less coolly and throwing away his cigarette.*] Have you told him this?

MARIETTA

Have I? My God, I can say it till I'm black in
the face. From mornin' till night.

DEDAUX

What does he say?

MARIETTA

You know how he'll act as well as I do. Pulls
a long face, looks hurt. My God, I'm tired of
that long face of his! I'm tired of his eyes, I tell
you, looking, looking. What's it about his eyes,
anyway?

DEDAUX

Oh, damn him!

MARIETTA

And I know all the time he'll get on without me; he's the kind can get on without anybody. Without anybody.

DEDAUX

And she don't like that?

MARIETTA

No matter. But just now all the same when he sees me—I've waked up and he was looking at me. I feel as if I had to sleep all night with the moon shining in my face, that's what I do; all night with the moon shinin' in my face. I'll go off my head, I tell you—

DEDAUX

Listen, I'm talking like a philosopher. He doesn't attract you, that's the point, voila! If you loved him you'd whistle another tune.

MARIETTA

[*Pausing a moment.*]

Guess that's right.

DEDAUX

[*With a coolness meant to taunt her.*]

Perhaps you feel that way about all of us. Too bad, just as I began to hope——

MARIETTA

Don't be silly, Armand.

[She moves toward him a little, he moves away from her almost imperceptibly. She looks at him, troubled. Then she assumes an air calculated to attract him on a different line.]

MARIETTA

[Gayly.] I love the great Dedaux about this much. See?

[She takes a kiss from her lips with her fingers and lays it on the palm of the other hand. Then she blows this away and makes a little shrug with her shoulders. After this she turns toward him and throws her arms around his neck and kisses him passionately again and again.]

DEDAUX

My beautiful love! My adored one!

MARIETTA

I do love you.

DEDAUX

[Passionately, and relapsing into his usual

melodrama with women, holding her off a little and looking in her eyes.]

Then you are mine, and I am thine forever. You'll come on away.

MARIETTA

[*Startled.*]

Come away? How do you mean?

DEDAUX

We can't stay here. We couldn't hide it, everybody knows it already. I mean, knows we love each other. They'd take his part. They like him, they pity him, he's got 'em sorry for him. The big card of the show now. He's got the crowd in his hand, that means he's got us all in his hand. So long as it lasts.

MARIETTA

[*Moving away from him.*]

Say, my God, how quiet it is in there, who's on now? It's Pigeons, she's gone bad. Then the card tricks, then Valdez.

DEDAUX

Carlo, yes. And I've been here long enough. I'm out of it. I'm gone, *passé*. Don't you understand?

MARIETTA

[*Walking over and resting her hand on the table and trying to maintain her own exis-*

tence against the force of DEDAUX's attraction.]

But you see how it is! I've got my job here, Armand. I'm a little success, couldn't we say, no?

DEDAUX

You'd be a success anywhere. I'll find you a better place. I've got chances, can't you believe that? [She nods.] Any manager would jump at the chance to get a girl like you. Some day we might come back to Tip, even.

[*There comes the sound of faint applause.*

MARIETTA steps out toward the rear of the stage a foot or two.]

MARIETTA

'S not much of a hand Pigeons's getting.

DEDAUX

More than she'd get if I were the audience. [He comes masterfully up to MARIETTA and crushes her in his arms. He speaks with both passion and self-complacency.] My beautiful Marietta, my beautiful love! I've been dreaming of you, I've been thinking every minute of the day and night of you—

[*There is a great burst of applause. MARIETTA moves a little away from him and puts her fingertips on the table as she listens. She becomes more excited as she speaks.*]

MARIETTA

There's Valdez now! How they clap! I say, listen, don't they!

DEDAUX

[*After a pause.*]

Well?

MARIETTA

Well, what?

DEDAUX

Are you so sure you want to give it up?

MARIETTA

What up?

DEDAUX

[*Insinuatingly.*]

He'll have money now, money with this success.

[*MARIETTA listens a moment to another burst of applause. Then she turns suddenly and fiercely to DEDAUXT.*]

MARIETTA

I'll go. I'll go with you.

[*DEDAUX takes her by the hand and draws her toward him.*]

DEDAUX

There, there! We'll go. You're shaking all over.

[*He holds her hand in both of his, but does not*

embrace her.] Where do you want to go? Shall we go to Las Flores again? Eh?

MARIETTA

Las Flores?

DEDAUX

And if we want to come back to Tip's show, maybe we can do it there in Las Flores when he comes. He'll be coming to Las Flores.

MARIETTA

I want to be with you, Dedaux.

DEDAUX

[*Stepping away as a sound of someone's step can be heard.]*

There! We'll be all right. Someone's coming.

[*Tip appears at the head of the steps, rubbing his hands together.]*

TIP

[*Half heard as he comes through the tent opening.]*

By George, that's a hand for you. If you can get a hand from any crowd like that, you don't need to— [*Suddenly stiffening as he sees MARIETTA and DEDAUX.]* Mr. Dedaux, I'd like to speak with you. You'll excuse us, Marietta. [*MARIETTA nods and walks slowly across to the left hand side of the*

stage, where she moves about looking around at the walls and the room in general as if indifferent to what was being said. TIP lowers his voice.] See here, Dedaux, what's this going on between you and Marietta?

DEDAUX

May I ask what you think is going on, sir?

TIP

I know you know damn well that Valdez and Marietta belong together, don't you? Why they haven't married, I don't know, damned if I do. She won't marry anybody, I'm told. Or, perhaps, they're married for all I know. What's the difference where you come in? They're as good as married. There's rights any man's got to respect, one of them's women and any man knows it. You keep out of this if you know what's good for you.

DEDAUX

[With much dignity.]

I will try to act as I think best.

TIP

Very well, sir, if that's the way the wind blows, we'll see what you think best then. See?

[DEDAUX remains cool and insolent and walks coolly away to where MARIETTA is. As he goes there comes the sound of tremendous

applause from the audience and the sound of people walking about and leaving the place. Three or four people run in, among them supers and the Two Suitors from the pantomime.]

FIRST SUITOR

He's got 'em where he wants 'em tonight, absolutely.

SECOND SUITOR

They've been throwing money down, Mr. Thompson, all over the stage; that's a Mexican trick I like. To that I bow.

[He bows to an imaginary audience. PIGEONS comes in, walking sullenly down the stair, dressed in her magenta-spangled gown, with its red ruffles and train, in a Floradora hat and blond wig. Her eyes are made up with heavy grotesque lines spreading out in rays like eyelashes on a mask. She carries three hoops used for the pigeons.]

TIP

He's a hit, eh, Pigeons?

PIGEONS

It's a good thing somebody is, my act was frost enough. *[As she throws the hoops contemptuously away.]* If it goes on like this, we'd better make 'em into a pie.

TIP

'S right.

PIGEONS

[As she unties the bows of her hat.]
Do you think he's such an actor, Tip?

TIP

Such an actor, such a humdinger as all that?

PIGEONS

[Flinging her hat against the left wall.]
Don't seem to me he is, not all that.

TIP

Well, he don't pretend to be.

FIRST SUITOR

Well, I don't care a damn whether he's great or not. When I see him on the stage there doing his stunt I feel like a little boy. I'd like to fight for him.

[PIGEONS has taken off her wig.]

TIP

There, son, you said it. Want to—that's the way he makes 'em feel—they feel he's somehow—aw, hell, you know—so they jes give him a hand—

PIGEONS

Poor kid!

TIP

Aw, but you got to admit when you come to scratch he's got this stunt down cold.

FIRST SUITOR

Well, what you going to say, who's the judge, if the audience likes it this way?

PIGEONS

Say, you talk a lot, don't you?

[*VALDEZ comes in, accompanied by the actor who had played the OLD MAN in the pantomime, and by the two daughters. Various Mexicans from the audience, perhaps, and a super or two follow, and hang about in the rear for awhile. VALDEZ has a handful of coins, which he is pouring into the red bag of a purse which some Mexican has thrown into the ring and which now is held by the OLD MAN, and then VALDEZ takes the handkerchief into his hand. They hurry him along rather triumphantly. He is excited, as he comes down the stage and his walk suggests a little that he has not yet come out of the act that he has been playing—a hint about it of the Charlie Chaplin, in fact. TIP claps his hands.*]

TIP

Hey, that's the boy! [Turning to MARIETTA.] Look there, aren't you proud of your sweetheart, Spanish Beauty? Ah, you drew the prize all right.

MARIETTA

I drew the prize all right.

VALDEZ

[Looking at her with a sort of flickering smile.] Marietta?

[He is asking for her praise. TIP more or less pushes MARIETTA slightly toward VALDEZ. She runs to him and throws her arm around his neck. He lets his head sink down to her shoulder, one hand hanging at the side with the money, and seems to forget the people present. He stands there long, too long, or would if MARIETTA did not remind him and move away from him a little, half looking around the room for DEDAUX as she does so. DEDAUX stands on the right, some way back from the front, looking coolly on and with self-complacence.]

FIRST SUITOR

Shall we scatter the gold, my lord?

[He snatches the red purse of coins and makes a swirl around.]

MARIETTA

[Walking up to him and taking the handkerchief.]

Not much, you get the second daughter's riches, not the third's.

[She makes a step toward VALDEZ and more or less of a gesture of giving the money back to him, but only more or less. VALDEZ waves it away.]

VALDEZ

No, Marietta, keep it, what else is it for?

[Applause from the LADIES present. Cries of "That's the way gentlemen act! To the Ladies!" Applause. Then VALDEZ in his happiness begins to treat them as if the people there on the stage were the audience of a moment since. He begins his Charlie Chaplin play and makes love to the LADIES, loses something, takes out his cigarette and so on. As he is doing all this, the wall on the right is slid aside and the cart stage is pushed toward its place in the room outside to the left. But the LADIES stop the cart. The canvas walls are slid back into place.]

LADIES

Let's have Charlie up there! Just a minute! Oh, please, Valdez! Carlo!

[VALDEZ looks about for encouragement or approval, his eye passes TIP, who is smiling, and reaches MARIETTA, who, standing near DEDAUX, is smiling almost too brilliantly to deceive anyone but VALDEZ at this moment. VALDEZ turns and looks at her a moment and at the sight of her smiling there leaps to the stage, and up on the platform, and begins to act tricks and turns as Charlie Chaplin. He adds to the whole thing now something wilder and more astonishing. There is a good deal of humming and whispering and enthusiasm among the people watching him. Someone shouts "Ride him, cowboy!" One of the Mexicans gives at one point a sort of yell of delight.]

MARIETTA

[Turning to DEDAUX.]

You've got to admit's he's an actor.

DEDAUX

Yes.

MARIETTA

[Turning her head away when VALDEZ puts in what she sees is real feeling. She resents his emotion.]

But it makes me tired! He's bound always to do too much before he gets done.

[*Every now and then the clowning pauses and there is a little waiting stillness on VALDEZ's part, and the people grow quiet and watch; then when he feels the stillness, VALDEZ breaks into antics again. There is a strange eagerness, wistfulness, sense of fatality about him.*]

DEDAUX

I'll wait for you at the main entrance. I'll go on when there's a chance. You follow.

[*MARIETTA nods her head. PIGEONS, who has been down on the left front of the stage, has seen little of what goes on on the cart; she has kept her eye on MARIETTA and especially on DEDAUXT. She sees him as VALDEZ goes on with his antics making his way around through the crowd and up the steps in the rear to the right. Then she sees MARIETTA go toward the back and disappear among the people there. Meantime VALDEZ has struck a certain whirling course on the cart, running round and round in a mad, grotesque vortex, then he stops and comes to the front of the cart.*]

VALDEZ

And so. [With a grand bow.] You are very kind! [He looks around happily and excited, panting for breath, to find MARIETTA. He gets the shock of her absence, and after a dumb moment runs down

the steps and begins to look for her among the people on the stage.]

VALDEZ

Where is Marietta? Is she in her dressing-room?
Do you know where Marietta is?

FIRST DAUGHTER

I didn't notice when she went out. Did you?

FIRST SUITOR

No, I was watching Carlo. She's in her dressing-room, I reckon.

[VALDEZ goes out quickly to the left front and comes back at once. He has a handkerchief of MARIETTA's in his hand.]

VALDEZ

She's not there. [He turns toward the audience and stands looking out into space. You can see the dread come into his face with a certain idea that strikes him. He turns and goes toward the people, so much excited that they think he is acting again.] Where is she? Did anyone see her go?

[There is a burst of laughter and a little clapping from the people nearer him.]

TIP

[Serious and kindly.]

Oh, she's foolin' around somewhere. She'll be here in a minute, better get your things off.

[TIP pushes the cart back toward the wall.]

VALDEZ

But have you seen Marietta? Did you see her go out anywhere?

[FIRST SUITOR begins to be uneasy, stands watching VALDEZ.]

SECOND SUITOR

[Imitating.]

No, I've not seen Marietta. I don't know where to find her.

VALDEZ

Marietta? [People laugh as he goes to the women.] Do you know where she is?

SECOND SUITOR

[Picks up a huge make-up towel and holds it between his fingers like a handkerchief.]

Have you seen her?

[TIP goes and puts his arm around VALDEZ's shoulder and holds him.]

TIP

Say, listen, she'll be back in a minute, come on and get yourself dressed, old man. [Calling to the

crowd.] Time for lights out, ladies and gentlemen, better get busy, I reckon.

[The Mexicans and hangers-on have vanished from the rear and the various people on the stage have already begun to take off their costumes. VALDEZ at the dressing-table, toward which TIP has directed him, takes off his hat and then his mustache.

[TIP goes up the steps to the right back and gives an order; the lights in the house beyond are put out. The back of the stage darkens, leaving only the front light not very brightly lit. PIGEONS is standing at the front left. She leans over and takes the red DEVIL costume that DEDAUX had worn and begins stoically to fold it up, taking her time as she goes, making fold on fold, layer on layer, using for the rack on which to work the seat of the chair and the back of it. TIP goes aimlessly over to PIGEONS.]

TIP

Do you know anything about it, Pigeons?

PIGEONS

I saw them go; she went out the lower door, he the steps.

TIP

Dedaux's left his costume here! See, Pigeons.

Hey, old man, come over here. [VALDEZ joins TIP and the latter puts his hand on his shoulder.] Say, you're late getting your things off, ain't you; don't bother about turning out the lights, I'll tell Henry to see to them; there's only these.

[VALDEZ stands looking at the people around, there are four or five left. They have finished getting themselves free of the make-up and costumes and are going.]

VALDEZ

[Looking at them drolly and wistfully says to TIP.]

The mask has fallen off, hasn't it?

TIP

Hey?

VALDEZ

I say the mask has fallen off.

TIP

[Taking in the meaning.]

Yeah. [Then after a pause.] But that don't matter.

VALDEZ

No.

TIP

You get some sleep if you can, you've had a day of it. Can I do anything for you, old man?

VALDEZ

Good night, Tip.

TIP

Then I'll leave you. Don't bother about the light. I'll tell Henry.

[VALDEZ turns numbly and looks at PIGEONS.

He and she, as the people disappear to the rear, are the only persons on the stage.]

PIGEONS

I'm sorry, Carlo, I really am.

VALDEZ

Pigeons, you know something, you can tell me.

PIGEONS

What good would it do if I did? You can't do anything about it.

VALDEZ

It's better to know. It's better to know.

PIGEONS

[*Saying something that implies the whole bitter irony of her life.*] Not always.

VALDEZ

Always, I think.

PIGEONS

Say, while we're asking, you tell me something.

VALDEZ

What?

PIGEONS

I'm always trying to understand you men. I swear I'd like to know why you want Marietta? Especially when she does not want you. Why you want Marietta! Well! She's a beauty if you like that sort, all right. But that's love, of course. I know how that is, I reckon. I wasn't always in the theater, my lad; as you know, I come from a family —well, never mind, they were not theatrical people. I had a governess and I was taught—I used to read the Poets, I used to—the point is, the first time I loved—he was beautiful, but what a fool! God, he was a fool, when I think of him. That's the joke life plays on all of us—isn't it?

VALDEZ

Oh, no, no, no, Pigeons.

PIGEONS

Ah, yes, yes, yes, Pigeons. That's what's happened to you, my boy. Just like me. Oh, maybe I wasn't so poetical but still—same business exactly—I've had mine, see? I've had my medicine. And yet I just got to wonder, you and Marietta—

The Lord knows what goes on in you, my dear. I hope He knows, for the rest of us don't. But I know that something's going on in you all the time. The chambers in the house of dreams are filled with so divine an air—in my own sweet time—once—well, never mind. Women would like you if you'd let 'em. You'd puzzle 'em, see? [VALDEZ stands there toward the right middle of the stage, as she talks, very quiet.] But why do you let her wipe her feet on you, I say? Why give all you got to a jane like Marietta, see?

VALDEZ

Well, you see it's like this, Pigeons. I didn't give her what I feel toward her. I didn't give myself my life, either. Life just springs in us. Doesn't it?

PIGEONS

I don't know, I suppose we are, I mean it does, how should I know? [Unfolding some of the red robe and folding it over again, and then crushing it unconsciously in her arms.] For Christ's sake, how do I know? At any rate, I should think you'd hate her after the way she's gone and acted towards you.

VALDEZ

[Shaking his head.]

No.

PIGEONS

I sh'd think you'd want to beat her face in, I

would, I know. Well, for goodness' sake tell us what you do want, if you don't want to beat 'em and make 'em love you and you don't want to hate 'em because they don't love you, kindly tell me what in Sam Hill you do want 'em to do?

VALDEZ

Well, you see, I can't say it very well, I've thought about it enough—and if I did try to say it, it would seem—it might—sound like a lecture.

PIGEONS

For God's sake, go ahead. Lecture—give us a lecture, come on, who cares, I tell you!

VALDEZ

Well, if I answered what you ask, I'd say I want people to succeed in themselves. I want them to be happy in their own souls.

PIGEONS

[*Wiping her eyes.*]

Say, you make me laugh, you nut.

VALDEZ

Laugh.

PIGEONS

[*Hoarsely.*]

Ha!

VALDEZ

You're not laughing.

PIGEONS

[*Blowing her nose.*]

I am, you little fool. [There is a pause as PIGEONS returns to her task of folding the robe.] Well, you can count on one thing. Dedaux will drag her down. That's his kind. You can't be decent with him. There's only one way gets him. I ought to know. You know, so why shouldn't I say it? Besides, I don't matter, so what's the difference? I'm on the dump heap and nobody cares a damn—I don't myself much any more, see? He drops us, that's his style. He dropped me like hot cakes all right, too. And oh, at first butter wouldn't melt in his mouth! Swine! But she'll stick to him, mark me, Marietta'll stick to him. Women don't leave Dedaux.

VALDEZ

Why, do you know why?

PIGEONS

[*Laughing coarsely.*]

That's the ladies' secret, my dear. [VALDEZ winces and more or less turns away.] So that sticks in your craw? What'd you think it was, his literary style? Well, my dear, I can tell you this—say, Henry'll be coming to close up, you better be getting

your didies on. [VALDEZ *does not move.*] I can tell you this. You ought to never mixed yourself up with a woman, I can tell you. You want everything too perfect.

VALDEZ

You don't think I think myself so much that I could demand in a woman just because I——

PIGEONS

I can't argue that, all the same you want a woman to be perfect.

VALDEZ

I don't ask perfection in the person, but only in the thing.

PIGEONS

In love you mean? [He nods.] Say, that's worse, it's not human. The only perfect love I ever heard of you give your life for somebody. What's in it?

VALDEZ

Pigeons, where'll they go, do you think? Tell me!

PIGEONS

Back home, of course, to the States. They couldn't get on in Mexico. They'll be back in Las Flores, take my word for it. You'll find them there all right, they're the kind. Now you're all trembling, say, le's see your hand. It's cold as ice. There now, what do you care? [She takes a small

pistol from her pocket.] Look, I'll cross your palm with something warm all right. I was thinkin' I'd use it myself last summer, but I didn't. I could a-pumped him full but I didn't. Some good slugs of buckshot would help those babies all right, I reckon. Come on, Tip's got plenty of 'em, hey? All right, you don't have to take it. [*She has put the pistol in his pocket as she speaks.*] Say, Henry'll be coming, go on and get your things on, boy. [*Moving from him.*] And look, what did you want to let her kid you like that just now and give her the money, I'd like to know?

VALDEZ

I wanted so much to be happy, Pigeons.

PIGEONS

[*Moved almost beyond herself but holding herself in.*] Say, Henry'll be coming!
[*She is working again with the red robe.*]

VALDEZ

Have you seen them together? Much?

PIGEONS

Ha, have I?

VALDEZ

[*Putting his hand on her arm.*]
When?

PIGEONS

Any time almost. Hey, look out, you hurt. What do you think I am, you mut, Kansas City beef? [She moves away from him to the right and VALDEZ steps toward the middle of the stage.] I saw 'em tonight, after the Three Suitors of Seville was over, off stage there, wonder you didn't.

VALDEZ

[*Standing stone still.*]
What——?

PIGEONS

Put his arms around her, it was by that side drop.

VALDEZ

And what did she do?

PIGEONS

She kissed him.

VALDEZ

[*Starting.*]
Kissed him?

PIGEONS

[*Her voice raucous and loud.*] Kissed him fifty times. [With that, VALDEZ gives a cry of despair and grief and rage, like the cry of an animal, and runs towards the entrance to MARIETTA's dressing-room on the left. But he stops before he reaches

it and as he hears PIGEONS slap her hands and call at him.] Hey, you little fool, what good is that? They're gone, you know it.

[VALDEZ turns his head slowly and numbly looks at her.]

VALDEZ

[In a low, gentle voice.]

Forgive me.

PIGEONS

Say—

[She turns stoically, puzzled, desperate, tragic, after a look at VALDEZ, and begins again folding up the red robe and presently disappears off the stage to the right. VALDEZ says nothing else, and stands there looking at no one, taking off his gloves absently, as Charlie Chaplin might do. A lonely little figure doing nothing.]

CURTAIN

ACT IV

SCENE: *The portico of the seminary a year later, Good Friday. The curtain rises on a stage full of shadow. A dim light is in the street outside and on the landing of the stair in the wall opposite a dim light falls. Far off in the town can be heard a rumor of the procession music. In the direction off beyond the stair there is a murmur of a guitar and a mandolin, gone almost as soon as it is heard.* VALDEZ sits on a bench, stage left, by the wall opposite the seminary door. His head is slightly bowed and he looks out steadily at the floor in front of him. He has on a hat, pushed back somewhat from his face. For a moment the procession music has grown a little louder, and VALDEZ rises and goes over to the gateway on the left and pulls the bell chain. Then he goes back to his seat on the right. The clatter of the bell on its coil of springs inside is heard. After a little the gate opens and PACHO enters.

PACHO

Yes? [He sees VALDEZ and looks hard at him.] It's you, Señor? [VALDEZ takes off his hat as he

rises and clasps PACHO by the hand. The sound of the procession music cannot be heard now.] Señorito, how are you? Will you come in? They're all gone, I've got the last of 'em off, thank God.

[*The music starts again, louder, then softer, plaintive and dark.*]

VALDEZ

Listen——

[*Makes a gesture as if to listen.*]

PACHO

The streets wind, these old Spanish streets; now you'll hear the music and then you won't hear it. That's the way it is, Señorito. They wind and wind and wind, the streets wind and wind and wind, and so we go. But I'm just talking to be talking.

[*PACHO sits down on the bench on the other side of VALDEZ, close to him. For a while the two sit there together while the music goes on; it swells, the horns, the tum-tum-tum of the drums, and sinks again.*]

VALDEZ

Music is a strange thing.

PACHO

Señor, where have you been? I know you've left

Thompson, I know that, but that was ten days ago, Señorito?

VALDEZ

I've been up on the range.

PACHO

The old place? [VALDEZ *nods.*] Was it the same, Señorito?

VALDEZ

Pacho, there's a wild something in it there.

PACHO

You told me.

VALDEZ

Something that seems outside of law. I've been walking about. Pacho, you've heard it, when the wind blows here or in the music, for that matter. You'll hear it when the procession comes by. And I will have it in me forever if I can.

PACHO

I know, Señor. Go on. It will do you good to talk. Tell me, Señorito, now you've left the show business, what you're going to do, eh?

VALDEZ

Pacho, they've liked me, I suppose. But I'm not an artist, I'm not a born artist. I don't need to pour myself out for people to understand; I watched

myself; I'm not miserable if I don't put myself into something, as an artist must be. I've got no hunger to pour myself out. What I want is to flow into myself, if that's not something mad I'm saying. I want to hold on to myself. To go on forever in my own truth. You remember how we used to talk, Pacho?

PACHO

Si.

VALDEZ

Long ago that was.

PACHO

Si, Señorito, many swallows have flown over the house since then, as my mother used to say.

VALDEZ

So people have told you I have left Thompson, have they? And Marietta thrown me off? They know already—but it's no matter—

PACHO

Señor, they say here in Las Flores, you'll be one of the great actors of the world.

VALDEZ

[Shaking his head with simple finality.]

Oh, no, Pacho.

PACHO

They say so.

VALDEZ

'Twasn't that I was such an actor and all that, not a new genius discovered, new star swimming into heaven, no. At first I did a character, sort of hobo, and so on, and it fell flat, I can tell you, my number did.

PACHO

But the Charlie Chaplin went. Si, Señorito, and I know why. Si. [VALDEZ looks quickly at him inquiringly.] The little foolish defeated life in us all. All the same, in Aguas Calientes, they snowed money on you but you went away.

VALDEZ

Even the crowd those nights had something, I could feel it. I want that something; I want that more than I do to act out myself for them. The people in the crowd may change from time to time and may do different things, but there is something always in them that is the same.

[*The music comes through the far-off streets, a long stream of sound, the horns mostly, broken by the drums now and then. It is all soft and flowing, not this time heard clearly.*]

VALDEZ

Just as there was always something under the canyons and the storms that used to come, and the nights when it was clear. You know, Pacho. Under

that old music, listen. Something that goes on in an unbreakable line, always, something like motionless truth.

PACHO

Señorito, you sound like a pagan somehow, talking the way you do. God is your father, but the earth's not your mother, we all know that. [The music continues, dim, a little harsh, the horns.] I like philosophy but I'm not going to get mixed up, you see. [Rising as if to settle this heresy once and for all.] The body is clay. Señor, come back to us. There's room for you and everyone would be glad if you came back, Señor. You might think not, but they would, Señor, every mother's son in this place would. You could be a priest some day, or a great writer, as the Bishop said, or you could be a professor some day, teach philosophy, if you like, Señor.

VALDEZ

That's a long way off, Pacho. That'll decide itself when the time comes. Perhaps yes. Perhaps I'll shut that gate and will go on.

PACHO

Go on where, Señorito?

VALDEZ

On in my life. One thing is certain, Pacho, it's something we learn: in life we can never go back, there's no going back.

PACHO

Everything ends as God wills it. And I know, Señorito, you'll follow your road. [The music sounds fainter until it is scarcely heard, the tum-tum of the drums sounds; almost nothing else can be heard.] But in this place everything that's happened might slip from you like water on a duck's back. I'm an old man and I know how quiet it is. I've been here thirty years. I know how it is when the sun sets. And when the bell rings and it's time for benediction. You hear sounds over the wall but they come faint, you don't hear 'em much, just enough. That's the way it is. Yes, that's the way it is. Why don't you come back, Señorito?

VALDEZ

My way I don't see yet, not clearly. All there is is to find the perfect thing in yourself.

PACHO

[Nodding his head.]

Si, Señor, there is only the love of God. [VALDEZ reaches out his hand and lays it on PACHO's arm. PACHO sinks down till he is sitting on his left heel, near VALDEZ and facing the audience.] But can we find this love of God, Señor? Will you find it?

[You can hear music far away, one dirge against the other; it comes now loud, now soft, dark and hot and ancient. VALDEZ slips to the

floor on his knees and stands there before PACHO.]

VALDEZ

I've fought and I've lived and I've been through things—and I don't know what's happened yet—in me. [The two dirges play against each other; one comes louder, the other softer, and farther off; one is deeper and heavier and more compelling in its progress; the other more broken and quick and sharp and carried by the drums.] I know it's no redemption that's come now at last, and I know it's no refuge from the life of my flesh. There was a miracle in my passion. [Only the first dirge is heard now. It rises and is more plaintive and tragic, and it grows more clear and less heavy in volume and seems to soar away into all space and time.] I know that my hands will forget some things and my eyes, too. I know that I'll be happy and I'll be beaten and alone, but I know, too, that I will not die of it. No, not die of anything that comes. [And as he comes to this line the music dies into a longer, unbroken beauty of tone and goes pouring on into the scene and over the night outside.] And if I have patience I'll see the thing that years have given and only years can give, Pacho, in any man's life—the long line of the soul's days that makes life possible to bear.

PACHO

Señor!

VALDEZ

The long line of the soul's days that makes it possible to bear!

PACHO

God bless you, Señorito.

VALDEZ

I know I'll be carried on. Things are what they are: I know that. Within them we make a choice and live by it. And I'll have to pay the price. Pay how much I don't know yet. We pay one time this, another that. But I'll pay. [PACHO *buries his face in his hands*. *There is a faint revival for a moment only of the second dirge against the still fainter first dirge, and the music becomes almost inaudible*. VALDEZ turns to PACHO beside him there as he rises to his feet and puts his hand on PACHO's shoulder, trying to prevent his distress.] Pacho! No, don't feel so bad over it.

PACHO

[*On his knees still and left there now at VALDEZ's feet.*]

No, no, Señor, I'm not crying because I think you are only wrong and blind and will never see this peace. You will have it, Señor, you'll be happier than any of us, oh, yes. But you're so very young, as if you were my little son.

[*The sound of the procession music swells again, not too loud, from some street far away, rich,*

heavy, wild. PACHO uncovers his face and looks up at VALDEZ. VALDEZ, while the sound of the music pours in, walks sharply off toward the middle of the stage.]

VALDEZ

If only this can happen, Pacho, that I never see her again! That I don't see her any more. Sometimes I think of what comes to her—I can't bear to think of all the things in her little heart that she will never have. [PACHO makes a gesture of sad protest.] I've thought of that often on the ranch, walking about and thinking how one life digs into another and nothing can ever go back, but always must go on. Oh, God. [He changes suddenly into violent feeling.] If I see them again!

[*The music has sunk again, and the sharp necessity of what follows has no stream of sound to carry it. PACHO goes to VALDEZ, trying to calm him.*]

PACHO

Pobrecito!

VALDEZ

If I do see them, I'll——

PACHO

Ah, write prudence on your forehead with your finger! She's not worth it. Señor, I must tell you. She is here!

VALDEZ

She is here in Las Flores?

PACHO

Yes, Señor, I think I must tell you.

VALDEZ

Have you seen her?

PACHO

No, Señor, I sent her word to keep away from here.

VALDEZ

Is she alone, do you know, or is there someone with her?

PACHO

Someone with her. They'll all have a man, her sort. That chap from the show, Frenchman, I forget what he did.

VALDEZ

Knife thrower, Pacho. He throws knives. You know how they do it.

PACHO

Yes, Señorito. It's no more than I expected, she's that sort. It's better to forget all that. Will you come in? I'll be going in. Come in, Señor.

VALDEZ

[*Pointing to the right and trying to be quiet for Pacho's sake.*]

No, no, I'd like to walk here a while, in the plaza,

in the plaza. I can hear the procession when it comes this way; I'm coming back, Pacho. I'll see you.

PACHO

Señor—

[But VALDEZ does not heed him and disappears into the street on the right. PACHO looks after him a moment, and goes into the convent, closing the gate after him. After a little DEDAUX and MARIETTA come hurrying in from the right, from the street. MARIETTA enters the portico first. She is wildly excited.]

MARIETTA

I tell you it *is* Valdez, I tell you. I saw him, down there, down the street. I told you not to come this street. We could have gone to the procession plenty of other ways. But you would come, you fool! Just because I said I wouldn't come this way. You came this way just to make me do as you said instead of what I said. That's all it was.

DEDAUX

What if it was, we've been here nearly two weeks and I couldn't get you by here. Not near this place, not a damn step.

MARIETTA

Shh! He'll hear you. Don't talk so loud. You want to show who's master. I know you. *[Seeing*

that VALDEZ does not come and quieting a little.]
I tell you, Armand, I can't stand this place.

DEDAUX

You can't get that fellow out of your mind, is what's the matter with you. You don't love him and you can't forget him. There's nothing wrong about this place.

MARIETTA

Well, it's only natural I should think of him after all that's happened. And just a year ago.

[*The music of the procession comes from far away.*]

DEDAUX

Very well. Only let's go.

[*The sound of the music comes for a second louder.*]

MARIETTA

Hear that? That's the way the streets in this town wind. Listen now—you'll hardly hear it. He might come that way to meet the procession. I know these streets better than you do. Wait, please wait, Armand. [*He leans against the column of the portico nearest the right. The music is still heard, clear, tragic. During her speech it gradually sinks.*] Oh, my God, I wish they'd shut up that music. I was on this bench here, and he was there, near where you are, I can see it now. He was on his knees, while they went by. There was the statue

of Our Lady, blue robe with stars on it, she had the swords sticking in here, in her breast, see? Then the body of Jesus with lights all around. He was so white and blood was on his side. [She pauses. DEDAUX coolly strikes a match and lights his cigarette.] And I don't know, Valdez seemed like that—he seemed like a saint and like a child—he seemed such a long way off, Armand. He seemed so far away from me, like a child. I wanted to take him in my arms. Just to do that and then to go away and leave him. [Half sobbing.] Go away for good and leave him. [Suddenly shouting out.] Oh, please throw away that damned cigarette!

[She sits there with her hands between her knees, looking down. The sound of the music has gradually died away as MARIETTA sits there working her hands together in distress.]

DEDAUX

[Throwing away the cigarette.]

Willingly. It's plain, my dear, you can't get him off your mind. Just as you won't spend that money of his, your little red purse.

MARIETTA

We'll spend the rest of it soon enough when we do spend it. We got rid of what we had soon enough. Valdez never loved me. What do you think?

DEDAUX

I don't know. Why think of that now? It's all up now.

MARIETTA

Well, I do think of it. What's the matter with me, is what I'm thinking, that I can't love him? I can't love him.

DEDAUX

Think then, think. You never loved St. Peter, either.

MARIETTA

Yes, be funny, why don't you? Besides, what's it to you? You've got what you want.

[After a pause, DEDAUXT lights another cigarette and speaks, coolly and slowly, with a slight accent.]

DEDAUX

But, my dear Marie, if you want him back, you know, don't let me stand in the way.

MARIETTA

[Distressed and somewhat frightened.]

Oh, Armand!—

DEDAUX

If you can worship him—

MARIETTA

I may have worshiped him once. For that moment—until he—until—

[She rises as if she might go to him.]

DEDAUX

If you love him still——

MARIETTA

Can't you see, you fool, I never even wanted to marry him?

DEDAUX

Mais non, that's it? The soul! But not the flesh!

MARIETTA

[*Going to him.*]

Armand, you are not tired of me, are you? You want me still, don't you, Armand?

DEDAUX

[*Calmly.*]

Well, rather, let us say I do. Don't be foolish, sweetheart! But let's go, I want to get out of this. It's plain enough the chap's gone, if he was here at all.

MARIETTA

My God, I hope so.

[*As she relaxes a little in this sense of safety and as she glances at DEDAUX, he assumes an air of indifference to her and does not seem to see her. She begins to pull herself together a little, to straighten her dress, and then she takes a rose from the bouquet at her waist and puts it in her hair.*]

DEDAUX

Let's go, Marie.

[Walking away and toward the gate.]

MARIETTA

But listen to me, this once, won't you please, Armand? If you'd listened before when I told you, we'd never have been here in the first place. I tell you, we'll meet him. The thing to do is ring and go in with old Pacho till the procession begins to come by, then we can join it. I don't care whether he wants to see me or not, I'll ring.

[She rings the bell, you hear the clang of the bell inside, dwindling slowly down.]

DEDAUX

Do as you like, let's do something, anything.

[Footsteps are heard and the gate opens slowly and PACHO appears. He looks quickly out.]

PACHO

Is it you, Señor?

MARIETTA

Uncle, I'm back again. I've come to see you, before I join the procession.

PACHO

[Slowly and deliberately beginning to close the gate behind him.]

I see you are. [MARIETTA makes an eager gesture half unconsciously to prevent the gate's being

closed and moves her body toward it as well as her hand.] I've heard it all over town from end to end. Sent you a message. [He looks at her and speaks slowly.] You slut!

[DEDAUX looks at PACHO insolently and walks off toward the stage left, to the line of the portico with the street. His assurance is strengthened by the presence of a third person.]

DEDAUX

Very well. It appears, dear Marietta, that your uncle is not very glad to see us; we're not welcome, chérie. Allons.

MARIETTA

[Running toward him and taking his elbow and drawing him in, or trying to.]

Shh! He might hear you, you don't know, he may be.

DEDAUX

[Loudly, annoyed by her snatching at his arm and at the whole situation.]

Oh, we've had enough of this. Come on, I'm going!

[She holds on to him, drawing him back in spite of himself. Her fear spreads to DEDAUX, in spite of his noisy air. A slight measure of the procession music is heard, in the moment's silence that occurs. Then footsteps are

heard from the street on the left. MARIETTA is in terror. PACHO moves a step or two nearer the street on the left and stands near the bench. VALDEZ appears from the streets and stands bareheaded with the pistol in his hand. His eyes are frantic with passion; he is transformed almost with violent feeling.]

MARIETTA

[Hysterically.]

I told you so! Didn't I tell you so? [DEDAUX has retreated till he is almost against the gate. PACHO looks on coldly. MARIETTA drops on her knees. Animal terror shakes her whole body; she walks back from him, still on her knees, keeping her eyes on the pistol in VALDEZ's hand. DEDAUXT makes himself as invisible as possible as he retreats toward the right wall.] Don't kill me. Oh, don't, I'll do anything. Valdez, I love you, I do love you. I don't know why I did this. Really. Oh, for God's sake. I'll go away, we'll go away tonight and never trouble you again.

[VALDEZ lifts the other hand slightly to have silence.]

VALDEZ

Why doesn't he speak up? Isn't he going to fight for you?

MARIETTA

Oh, my God a-mercy! Uncle Pacho—!

[*She is walking on her knees toward VALDEZ, with her hands out.*]

DEDAUX

Give it to him, give him the money.

MARIETTA

[*Wildly, running her hand into a pocket in her skirt.*]

Here, take it back, here's nearly all of it; we haven't spent it; I've kept it; I don't know why, but I've kept it.

[*VALDEZ looks at her and sees the red bag with the money. The music of the procession comes suddenly on the scene, tragic, dark, in its steady stream, the horns, the low quick drums. It goes on now until the procession appears and passes, and continues till the last moment almost of the play.*]

MARIETTA

Take it, take the money.

[*VALDEZ, without answering, stands looking at MARIETTA, his head drops forward. He sees that the whole thing is not worth the trouble.*]

PACHO

You see, Señorito? She's not worth it.

[*His head drops still further down on his breast and he stands there without any hope. MARIETTA, watching him closely, sees that his*

anger is gone. She stops begging and keeps her eye fixed on VALDEZ'S movements.]

VALDEZ

[Without raising his eyes.]

Tell her to get up, Pacho.

[MARIETTA moves backward as she rises to her feet and clutches DEDAUXT'S arm, still uneasy.]

PACHO

There! Get out, both of you! [DEDAUX makes a motion as if he might be leaving or as if he might attack VALDEZ. PACHO looks at him in a way that halts him and then goes over to VALDEZ.] Here, Señor, I told you she was not worth it. Here, Señorito, I'll put it back for you. [He has been taking the pistol from the limp hand as he speaks and now he puts it into VALDEZ'S pocket.] There!

[All wait to see what VALDEZ is going to do.

He raises his head and fixes his eyes somewhere beyond MARIETTA and DEDAUXT, seeing nothing. The music of the procession comes gradually nearer. MARIETTA, remembering now that VALDEZ is armed no longer, is recovering herself somewhat. She moves forward and beckons DEDAUXT after her.]

MARIETTA

Armand, let's go.

[She draws back, however, and stands listening

to the music; the procession comes nearer and nearer. Then drawing DEDAUX with her she steps out into the middle of the stage. VALDEZ lifts his eyes and looks at her for a long time, then a wistful, odd smile comes over his face.]

VALDEZ

If you people are going with the procession, it's time, isn't it?

PACHO

Yes! Ha! [Scornful chuckle.] Let them join the procession.

[MARIETTA takes the flower from her hair and throws it on the ground. DEDAUX draws himself up insolently and takes a step or two toward the street. At that moment the first figures of the procession appear from the right. The seminary students come first with their lighted tapers. They are followed by the BISHOP, whose mantle is held by four boys. Priests and monks follow, all bearing lights of some kind. Then the people begin to come; they go sometimes two and two, sometimes four abreast. Everyone carries a torch or a taper or a lantern made of paper on a staff, cut out and colored. And every light is held down at the waist of the bearer; darkness hovers over the heads and shoulders of the crowd as they move past, and the light falls

on the lower part of their bodies. The effect is of lighted and luminous shapes moving along and throwing high shadows against the walls opposite. The music of the strange, half-barbaric dirge plays on the horns, the drums play a low, hypnotic tum, always tum-tum, tum-tum, like a sound of music across the desert. DEDAUX, without looking around, beckons by holding his hand a little way out to MARIETTA, and they, departing from the left middle of the rear stage, fall into the line as it passes, soon pushing into the ranks and not seen clearly for the whole length of the opening at the back. PACHO watches them stolidly till they are out of sight; then he looks at VALDEZ. VALDEZ stands there with his back still to the street. He pays no attention to PACHO. PACHO moves over toward the gate and lifts up his hand and rests it on the bell pull and turns toward VALDEZ.]

PACHO

Señor——

[But seeing that VALDEZ does not heed him, he gives a little shrug of his shoulders and shakes his head as he goes to the gate and with a key among the keys in a bunch at his waist, he unlocks the gate, looks back once at VALDEZ and goes in. The gate remains open.

The music plays and presently VALDEZ turns and watches mechanically the line of people filing past. He does not, as he did before, drop on his knees when the statue of the Virgin with the swords in her breast appears. He might make a slight motion as if to kneel and then not do it, enough to make the audience notice that this time he does not kneel. For a moment he turns absently away from it and stands looking into space. Then he turns and stands watching it. He sees her silver stars on the blue mantle shining in the lights; garlands of flowers are looped about the edges of her platform and lamps are burning around it. Over her head is the canopy of red velvet with gold tassels, the edges in wide scallops, gold fringed. This is carried by four men who walk on the outside of the bearers of the statue. The lines of the high gilded poles conflict with the statue's lines. The still form of the image contrasts with the moving and luminous and shadowy forms below. The statue of the Virgin passes and more people file by. Then presently comes another band playing the dirge on horns and drums. Faintly echoing against it the first music comes from a far-off street. As the band passes and VALDEZ knows that the statue of Christ is coming, he turns slightly

in the direction from which it will appear and holds his hands out somewhat from his side and a little upward, toward the coming statue. His loneliness pours out. In his heart he offers to this dead man the whole life he has led, the love, the dream and the despair of it. He triumphs for a moment in the sense of a friend. Then he sinks to his knees as he sees the statue, taken down from the crucifix in the Cathedral, appear. And the tragedy of Christ overwhelms him. He sees the white cloth about the loins and the blood that flows from the wound in the side. The lights burn in the globes around the bier and shine on the red velvet and the glass of the coffin and the flowers. It is the tragic figure of the cruelty of life and death, the pain, the sense of time and the earth, of the dream, the rapture, the silence and pause following the vision that has been seen. The body there seems to him to be gentle and still and white and fatal as the rocks of the earth. VALDEZ buries his face in his hands. The people toward the very last moments of the procession carry fewer lights, so that the last of it is slightly darker. The procession comes to an end, the last figures have disappeared. The scene is darker again, the dirge on the horns and drums grows fainter.

VALDEZ straightens himself up, standing on his knees still and holds out his hands in front of him. Then he throws his body down on the earth full length, with his hands over his eyes. In a turn of a street far off you can hear a little more sharply the dirge and the low tum-tum-tum of the drums. After a while VALDEZ rises to his knees again and then to his feet, and stands looking in the direction that the procession has gone. He walks in that direction till he comes to the corner of the wall, where he stands looking back at the seminary gate. The sound of steps is heard, students returning to the seminary. VALDEZ retreats to the back on the left and watches them come in. The students come down the stair at the back, in order gravely, impressed with the procession and the night, the music, the mood. They file into the seminary gate, leaving it open.

[VALDEZ stands looking at the door, and holding his hand in front of him like a blind man, begins to walk toward it slowly. In his movement there appears a suggestion of Variety acting, one or two steps he takes as if he were Charlie Chaplin again. As he walks he comes to the flower near the center of the stage, where MARIETTA has dropped it. He stops, leans down dumbly and takes the

flower up. He holds it a moment in his hand, then he drops it mechanically to the ground and moves toward the seminary door.]

VALDEZ

[*Nearing the door.*]

No!

[*The far-off sound of the music is heard no more. For a moment he stands looking at the floor. Then he lifts his head, stands a moment, and then goes steadily over and closes the seminary gate, shutting off the idea of returning there. Holding his hands down at his sides and slightly in front of him, VALDEZ moves toward the street. A dim whitening of dawn has already begun to appear. At the line where the street begins, VALDEZ pauses for a moment. The light reflected along the ground brightens further yet. But there is no triumphant burst of light, only a faint, pale glow, almost imperceptible, showing a little more on the ground than on the portico or the wall opposite. Then he walks forward into the street, walking in a sense on light, and disappears to the right.*

After a moment's silence, the curtain falls.]

FINIS

MUSIC FOR THE SAINT

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PROCESSIONAL.

MACKLIN MARROW.

Flute *Adagio*

I-II Horns

III Horn

Snare Drum

Timp

MUSIC OFF STAGE.

FIFES & DRUM APPROACH WITH VIRGIN

ff

mf

141

Handwritten musical score for 'Fife and Drum' featuring two staves. The top staff is for the 'Fife' and the bottom staff is for the 'Drum'. The score includes dynamic markings like 'P' (piano) and 'f' (fortissimo), and a tempo marking of '120'. The lyrics 'FIFE and DRUM PHASE off stage' are written above the staves, with 'Chant' written above the 'Drum' staff. The score concludes with the words 'APPROACHED' and 'of seg.'

4 HORNS WITH BODY of Christ CROSS STAGE

4

4

4

4

Sound of Procession dies away
in distance

off-stage - They're going back now to San Jose" *fff*

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